

TREATISE
ON THE
FAITH *and* HOPE
OF THE
GOSPEL.

In TWO PARTS.

*Striving together for the Faith of the Gospel. Phil. i. 27.
Earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Jude 3.*

And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the Hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the Hope of the Gospel. Col. i. 23.



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ERRATA.

Page 4, line 7, for than it is, *read* than as it is. P. 6, l. 16, for doth, *read* doeth. P. 10, l. 17, a comma after confidence. P. 12, l. 6, for life, *read* life. P. 17, at the bottom for Or, *read* in. P. 26, l. 30, *πρεσβυτερ* is scarce legible in some copies. P. 37, l. 12, for import, *read* imports. P. 42, l. 24, for the most God, *read* the most high God. P. 48, l. 28, for then, *read* than. P. 53, l. 32, for this not, *read* this is not. P. 60, l. 23, for is, *read* are. P. 68, l. 26, for those, *read* they. P. 71, l. 32, for hope, *read* hopes. P. 72, l. 23, for those, *read* they. P. 73, l. 26, for tiding, *read* tidings. P. 75, l. 18, for out love, *read* out of love. Ditto, l. 19, for is, *read* are. P. 93, l. 23, for they strength, *read* their. P. 96, l. 32, for gave away, *read* gave way. P. 102, in the note, l. 8th, from the bottom, for than, *read* then. P. 114, l. 3, for bond, *read* the bond. P. 132, after how, saith St. Paul, shall they believe, &c. wants a note of interrogation. P. ditto, l. 3, from the bottom, for is, *read* are. P. 143, l. 29, for they may think, *read* each may think. Ditto, last line, for to know, *read* will know. P. 167, l. 20, for is, *read* are. P. 170, l. 16, for which, *read* in which. P. 179, l. 4, for was a type, *read* were types.





... TO THE ...

It is written, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." Isaiah liv. 13. "And that no man can say "that Jesus is the Lord, (*with understanding*) but by the Holy Ghost."

I believe that the whole counsel of God to the Church is faithfully recorded in the holy scriptures : and that, " All scripture is given by inspiration

“ inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,
 “ for reproof, for correction, for instruction in
 “ righteousness : that the man of God may be
 “ perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good
 “ works.” 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Therefore the
 holy scriptures are the oracles of God; and are,
 and ought to be, the only standard of christian
 principles in faith, practice, and discipline.

I believe that no servant of Christ hath now
 any new revelation to deliver : because the Holy
 Ghost neither revealeth nor teacheth to any per-
 son any thing beside what is expressly written in
 the holy scriptures.

The knowledge of the original languages, read-
 ing and study are helpful and advantageous to
 understand the holy scriptures. Every preacher
 of the word of God may use the talents which he
 hath, to open, illustrate, explain and inforce the
 doctrine of the scriptures in the aptest and proper-
 est words he can : he may set forth in other words
 and in many words, what the scriptures express in
 few words ; provided that all which he delivers,
 be sound doctrine, and agreeable to the analogy
 of faith. But every preacher’s doctrine, and e-
 very christian’s faith, experience, and practice,
 must now be examined, and tried by the holy
 scriptures. “ To the law and to the testimony :
 “ if they speak not according to this word, it is
 “ because there is no light in them.” Isaiah
 viii. 20.

The Faith and Hope of the Gospel have been
 confounded together by many writers, as if they
 were but one thing : altho’ they are as distinct as
 the foundation and the superstructure. And the
 assurance of Hope hath been made to be of the
 essence

P R E F A C E.

essence of the Faith of the Gospel. Some writers have represented Faith as if it were a person with eyes and hands. Other writers have described the Faith of the Gospel as consisting of several different acts of Faith ; and various opinions and disputes have been maintained about those different acts of faith : as also, How faith justifies ; whether as a cause, condition, or instrument ?

Much of this altercation and confusion hath been owing to not understanding the sense or meaning of the word faith in its different acceptations in the scriptures, which hath occasioned great error in doctrine. The word faith sometimes signifies belief or believing ; and sometimes it signifies the gospel, the truth or doctrine, the thing or matter, which either is believed, or which is proposed to be believed. And sometimes the word faith is used to denote not only believing, but also the thing believed. This is more fully explained in the following treatise.

In order to vindicate the truth, and to make it appear more plain and clear, I have pointed out the mistakes or errors of several writers : but I have not judged or condemned their persons. I know that to err is human. I have not wrote in a spirit of controversy, or from any other motive, I trust, than to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints in meekness and fear, speaking the truth in love, and leaving what I have written to every man's conscience in the sight of God to be examined and tried by the holy scriptures.

My discourse is upon a serious and most important subject ; for nothing more is requisite to make a sinner a christian than the one faith, and nothing *less* will do it. My aim hath been to make it appear

pear. plain, what the one Faith of the Gospel is, and to distinguish it from all counterfeits. If any one thing be of more weight and concern to man than all other things on this side the grave to be satisfied about, it is this, Whether he is in the Faith?



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A

T R E A T I S E
ON THE
FAITH and HOPE of the GOSPEL.

In TWO PARTS.

PART I.

On the Faith of the Gospel.

HEBREWS xi. Ver. i.

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the
evidence of things not seen.*

SECTION I. The INTRODUCTION.

✱ ✱ ✱ E R Y excellent things are spoken of
✱ V ✱ Faith throughout the holy scriptures.
✱ ✱ ✱ Great and wonderful energy is ascribed
✱ ✱ ✱ to it. Without Faith it is impossible
to please God. “ Verily, verily, faith
“ the Lord Jesus, he that believeth on me hath
“ everlasting life.” John vi. 47. But, “ He
“ that believeth not on him is condemned already;
“ and the wrath of God abideth on him.” John
iii.

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iii. 18, 36. And again, "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16.

As man was created to be immortal, but by sin became mortal : as his continuance here on earth is short and uncertain : as he is to exist for ever hereafter either in a state of happiness, or in a state of misery : as there is a real difference betwixt pleasure and pain, betwixt happiness and misery ; an exceeding great and wide difference betwixt a state of eternal happiness and a state of eternal misery : as joy and happiness are agreeable to all men ; as pain and misery are disagreeable to every one : and as nothing is so shocking to any man as the thoughts of eternal damnation : ought it not to be the chief concern of every one, how to be eternally happy ? ought not all persons to weigh and consider well, how they may obtain eternal life ? Can there be a more important enquiry than this ? What shall I do to be saved ? What shall I do to inherit eternal life ? How shall I obtain peace with God ? How shall I regain his favour, or find acceptance with him ? or, as the prophet Micah strongly and elegantly expresses it ; "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God ? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old ? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ?" Micah vi. 6, 7.

As the Lord Jesus Christ is the author of eternal salvation, and the only Saviour of sinners : as he alone is the way, the truth, and the life : as he

is the door into heaven, and no man can enter therein by any other way or means; for he opens, and no one shuts; and he shuts, and no one can open: as he hath said, that those who believe on him shall be saved; but those who believe not shall die in their sins and be damned: Ought it not to be matter of serious, calm and deliberate inquiry to all those who profess christianity, Whether they be true believers or not?

St. Paul saith, "All men have not faith." 2 Theff. iii. 2. The Lord Jesus denotes the scarcity thereof in these words, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. vii. 14. And, "When the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke xviii. 8. St. Peter calls faith precious. 2 Peter i. 1. And indeed the precious gift of faith is a pearl of great price.

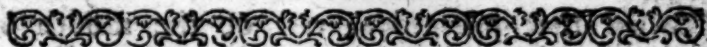
As therefore it is no insignificant or indifferent, but a grand, important and most momentous matter to "Examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith." 2 Cor. xiii. 5. I shall endeavour in this discourse to explain, describe and set forth the faith of the gospel, in as plain and clear a manner as I can, according to the understanding that I have in the holy scriptures. I believe that the holy scriptures were given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; and are able by the teaching of the Holy Ghost to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16. Nothing is to be added to them, nor to be taken from them. Rev. xxii. 18, 19. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak

“ speak not according to this word, it is because
 “ there is no light in them.” Isa. viii. 20. If
 either man or angel preach any other gospel, than
 that which the apostles have preached, “ Let him
 “ be accursed.” Gal. i. 8. I therefore caution
 the reader to weigh well what I write, and to re-
 gard it no further than it is agreeable to the o-
 racles of God. A man may be very positive in
 his opinion, and yet absolutely wrong. Remem-
 ber that all men are fallible. Therefore prove
 every thing by the holy scriptures; and hold fast
 what the God of truth hath spoken by the mouth
 of his holy servants the prophets, the evangelists
 and apostles.

Now tho’ so much mention is made of faith,
 and the fruits or effects thereof are set forth in so
 many places: yet the words of my text are the
 only definition of it, that I can recollect in all the
 bible. The words are few, but accurate and com-
 prehensive. They are a perfect definition of the
 faith of the gospel. The doctrine and the very
 words of scripture, in the languages wherein they
 were originally written, were inspired by the holy
 Ghost. God gave his holy servants both mouth
 and wisdom, as he promised. Luke xxi. 15.
 “ Which things also we speak, saith St. Paul,
 “ not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth,
 “ but which the holy Ghost teacheth.” 1 Cor.
 ii. 13. The translation of the holy scriptures in-
 to the modern tongues hath been a great blessing,
 and of very great use to the cause of christianity.
 Yet men of learning who have studied the origi-
 nals, know very well, that some places are falsely
 translated, and others weakly and lamely. It would
 be well worth the labour of all the learned men in
 every

every nation to conspire together to publish an accurate translation, retaining the very words of the translations now in use, where the sense is true, and the words are plain and proper. But this by the by.

I shall now proceed to explain the meaning of the words of my text : and afterwards endeavour to open the matter contained in them. And first I shall attempt to explain the sense of the word faith.



(S E C T I O N . II .

The meaning of the word Faith.

THE greek word Πίστις Pístis, translated faith, comes from the greek verb Πείθω Peithō, which signifies to persuade or to convince. The nature of faith is a persuasion and assent of the mind, arising from testimony or evidence. What we believe is the persuasion of our mind ; and that which persuades or convinces our mind, is evidence of some kind. To believe a thing means to assent to and give credit to it as true. The word faith hath different senses in holy scripture. Very often it signifies the thing believed, or the thing to be believed. And often it signifies belief or a believing. And the word faith is used in either sense ; and sometimes includes both senses ; and means the thing believed, and also the belief of it.

The word faith in my text means the belief of the gospel, including the thing believed as well as the belief of it.

It is the duty of man as a creature to believe what God saith, and to do what God commands. Therefore man is to hear God speaking, "Hear, and your soul shall live." Isa. ly. 3. God's word is the matter of faith or the thing to be believed. And the whole scripture-revelation is the word of God. And the belief of God's word is faith.

The Prophets gave this substantial reason for what they delivered, "Thus saith the Lord." God's word well attested is sufficient ground for man to believe and to obey. For, "By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live." (See Deut. viii. 3. Matt. iv. 4. Luke iv. 4.) Before the fall of Adam, man was to live by the word of God in the law, "The man that doth them, shall live in them." (See Lev. xviii. 5. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.) After the fall of Adam, man was to live by the word of promise, till Christ came and finished his work. But now man is to live by the word of the gospel of God, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED: HEAR YE HIM." Matt. xvii. 5. This testimony of God, called the truth, the record, the word and the faith of God, but most commonly the gospel or the faith, is the thing to be believed: But God's testimony is concerning Jesus Christ and his righteousness, his active and passive obedience, to be believed in, and depended on for acceptance with God, for pardon, life and salvation. The testimony of God is concerning the person of Christ, and the work of Christ. Now man is to believe the testimony of God; and upon the authority of it, he is to believe in Jesus Christ

Christ and his righteousness, whereof God hath testified, that he is well pleased. Therefore the faith of the gospel is the believing of God's testimony concerning Christ and his righteousness, and believing in Jesus Christ and his most perfect and divine righteousness, as the only sure ground of the hope of eternal life. He that believes the gospel, believes in Jesus Christ; and he that believes in Jesus Christ, believes the gospel.

As the word faith occurs so often in scripture, I will further endeavour to set forth the meaning of it in its different acceptations. "Children in whom is no faith." Deut. xxxii. 20. Children who neither believed God, nor were to be believed or trusted. Again, "Shall their unbelief make the faith (*the gospel, word or truth*) of God without effect." Rom. iii. 3. Public faith means what is to be believed and trusted betwixt one nation and another, and by all people. A creed, or a confession of faith, means the doctrine therein contained to be believed, or which is believed.

Sometimes the word faith means the thing to be believed or believed in. As, "He now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed." Gal. i. 23. *The faith* here means the gospel, as hath already been explained. In this sense the Apostle Paul frequently useth the word faith; as, "The hearing of faith." "The law is not of faith." "Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards he revealed. But after that faith is come." Gal. iii. 2, 5, 12, 23, 25.

When the word faith means believing, it implies a conviction or persuasion of mind upon sufficient

ficient or satisfactory proof or evidence, that the thing to be believed is true. Faith or believing is weak or strong, as the evidence that supports it is less or more, weak or strong. For example, "O ye of little faith." Matt. vi. 30. i. e. of a weak belief, of a timid or fearful persuasion of mind, scarce daring to believe or depend on God. "Abraham was strong in faith." Rom. iv. 20. He believed without doubting, he staggered not; he wavered not; he was fully persuaded in his mind; he had confidence in God; he depended on God's promise. "Have faith in God." Mark xi. 22. "Lord, increase our faith." "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed." Luke xvii. 5, 6. "Stephen, a man full of faith." Acts vi. 5. "Joy of faith." Phil. i. 25. "When your faith is increased." 2 Cor. x. 15.

My faith means what I believe. What I believe, may be true before I believe it; but it is not my faith before I believe it. The gospel is the truth of God, whether it be believed or not. The gospel doth not become a truth upon believing it: for it is the same truth before and after believing of it. But the gospel doth not become any person's faith, till he believes it. If I believe not the gospel; yet nevertheless it is the precious truth of God. But if I believe the gospel, it becomes my faith. Some writers conceiving the words *his faith*, to mean his believing, and no more, (in this remarkable text, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith* is counted for righteousness." Rom. iv. 5.) have concluded that a person was justified for his believing, if it was but right believing; and that his believing was

was counted or imputed to him for righteousness or justification. But this is a gross error. For sinners are neither justified for their own believing, nor their own obeying; nor for both together: neither for the truth or sincerity, or soundness of their believing; nor for any thing they have done, can do, or ever will do. Neither are they justified for any thing wherein they differ from others, or excel others; nor for any thing done or wrought in them, or received by them. For the whole and sole cause of the justification of sinners, is the active and passive obedience of Jesus Christ called the righteousness of God, "Which is unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. iii. 22. To justify sinners is the peculiar prerogative of the most High. "It is God that justifieth." Rom. viii. 33. "God is the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 26. How then can either faith or works justify a sinner? But God justifies ungodly sinners *upon* believing, (tho' not for believing;) by imputing to them the divine righteousness of Christ, which becomes their faith, when they believe God's testimony concerning it, and heartily believe in it. The words *his faith*, mean *what he believes*; including the righteousness of Christ, in which he believes, and also the belief of God's testimony concerning Christ and his work, as alone sufficient to save sinners, without any other requisite. Again, "Being justified *by faith*, we have peace with God." Rom. v. 1. Being justified by *what we believe*; for if we believe the gospel, therein is the righteousness of Christ revealed, by which God justifies us. Rom. i. 17. Again, "The just shall live *by faith*," Rom. i. 17. He that

is justified lives by *what he believes* upon the testimony of God concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ.

As it is of great use to understand the right sense of the word faith in scripture, one should carefully attend to the context, wherein it occurs. For misunderstanding the meaning of the word hath led men into great error; as that certainly is, when man's believing is put in the place of Christ's righteousness.—But I shall now proceed to explain two other material words in my text.



SECTION III.

The meaning of the words Substance and Evidence in the Text.

THE greek word *υποστασις* Hypostasis, translated substance, and on the margin, ground or confidence is used to signify something that is real and exists, in contradiction to what is chimerical or an idle fancy. The most holy faith or the gospel is a reality, yea, the very truth of God, who cannot lye. It is not an idle fancy or a delusion; it is no deceit or error, no falshood, no lye, nor a cunningly devised fable. 2 Peter i. 16. It is not a scheme of religion invented or contrived by men or devils, as many religions have been. But the living and true God himself is the author and the finisher of the christian faith.

But the word Hypostasis literally translated signifies subsistence, or that which is put and stands under another thing and supports it, being its base, ground

ground or foundation. Every building must have a foundation; but the foundation stands under the building and supports it. If the foundation fail, the building must fall. A house that is built upon firm and sure ground, or a rock, hath a good foundation: but a house that is built upon loose and rotten earth, hath a precarious foundation. 'Tis hazardous and uncertain, whether the house will stand. But the word Hypostasis denotes also stability and firmness; that which stands under, and is sufficient and able to support what is upon it. The word is also used to signify a confidence, which is not easily moved or soon shaken. The gospel, the most holy faith, is a real, strong, firm, safe, sound and sure foundation of hope. By custom since the latter end of the fourth century, the word Hypostasis hath been used to signify *person*. But this was not the original sense of this word; neither was this word ever used in this sense before the third century. Therefore this word is falsely translated *person* in Heb. i. 3. Thus much as to the meaning or sense of the greek word Hypostasis, which is translated substance: but might have been more significantly rendered in this place, the substantial foundation, or the sure ground of things hoped for.

Things hoped for are things expected. Now faith, be it true or false, is the base, ground or foundation and support of hope or things expected. True faith, or the belief of the truth, is a safe and sure foundation of hope, that will be crowned with the enjoyment of the good things expected. False faith, or the belief of a lie, is a foundation of hope, that will perish; whose end will be shame and confusion and disappointment.

Every

Every man's hope is of the same kind with his faith. The christian faith and hope are connected together. The faith of the gospel is the ground and support of the hope of the gospel. And the hope of the gospel is that exceeding great and eternal weight of glory, that eternal life, which is the reward of the most perfect and divine righteousness of Jesus Christ, which will be given of God for his sake to all, to whom his righteousness is given. But the things hoped for, will be considered more largely, and particularly hereafter, when I come to treat of the hope of the gospel.

The greek word Ελεγχος Elenchos, translated the evidence, denotes a proof so full, and plain, and clear, that it appears to the mind which comprehends it, self-evident : or, that the thing of which it gives evidence to the mind, is so, must be so, and cannot be otherwise. A man of sense will not believe every thing that he hears or reads, before he examines the evidence ; and if it be a matter of consequence, he will require good and satisfactory evidence before he believes it. But when a man hath full and satisfactory evidence, he must believe it. Otherwise he acts as weakly and absurdly, as he that doth not believe what he seeth with his own eyes. 'Tis said that seeing is believing, all the world over. But he that hath no eyes cannot see : and he that hath no proof or evidence for a thing, cannot rationally believe it. He that believes upon weak and uncertain evidence, is a weak and credulous man : but he that believes without any evidence, is blind in his intellects, and given to fancy. He that believes upon the testimony of credible men, hath moral proof : but he that believes upon the testimony of God, hath
in-

infallible demonstration. Whoever hath obtained the precious faith of the gospel, which is of the operation of God, and the free gift of God to him, hath this Elenchos, this evidence or demonstration of things not seen, of all those great and glorious things reported by the gospel, of which more will be said hereafter.



SECTION IV.

Of the nature of faith, and the difference betwixt human faith and divine faith.

THERE is a great difference between human faith and divine faith. I call that human faith, that stands in the wisdom of man, and hath only human, external and moral proof or evidence to support it. And I call that divine faith, that stands in the power of God, and hath the word or testimony of God, and the demonstration of the Holy Ghost to support it. More will be said of this when I come to shew how men obtain faith.

The words of my text may serve for a definition of every kind of faith. Yet the faith of the gospel is very different from every other kind of faith, and from every false faith in religion. I do not mean that *to believe* has a different sense in holy scripture from what it has in common language; but the faith of the gospel differs from every other kind of faith in the matter or thing believed; and in the ground and evidence which support the belief of it; as will more fully appear hereafter.

B

Faith

Faith is the foundation of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Whatever then is the ground or support of hope, that is the faith, the thing believed in, or the matter depended upon. And first with respect to political, publick or civil faith. What is the ground of hope and confidence betwixt one nation and another? I answer, the laws of nature and of nations; but in particular, the treaties of peace and commerce, the alliances offensive and defensive, which have been solemnly and formally made and ratified by those nations. To observe these strictly is called keeping good faith; to break these is called breach of faith. Now here the laws and treaties are the things believed in, the evidence of what is not seen, and the ground upon which people venture and trust in their intercourses. Again, what is the ground of hope in England to those who lend money to the government, that both principal and interest will be safe and secure? I answer, the laws of the nation. People believe and confide in the sanction of the laws made by the authority of the King and Parliament. The laws are the ground of hope to the people, and their evidence of things not seen. Again; supposing two or three honest neighbours come and relate to me some good and interesting news, upon their testimony and authority, I believe it. It becomes the ground of hope to me, and the evidence of what I had not seen. Upon the authority of good historians, we believe matters of fact done long ago; their testimony is to us the evidence of things not seen. Upon the evidence of credible witnesses, causes are determined in courts of judicature. The testimony of the witnesses is to the judge and jury, the evidence

of what they themselves have not seen or heard. This is human and moral proof: and this is human faith.

Again, with regard to religion.—Whatever is the ground and support of a man's hope that he shall be saved, that is his religious faith, be it what it will. Whoever then hopes to be saved by the profession of any religion, be it the Christian, Jewish, Mahometan or Heathen, that is his faith: Or whoever hopes to be saved by being in any particular sect, society, or party of any of those four great denominations, that is his faith. Again, whoever hopes to be saved because he is a moral man, that is his faith. He trusts in his morality. He believes or is persuaded in his own mind, that the practice of morality is sufficient to procure him the favour of God; and that he shall obtain salvation thereby. This is the faith of many persons. Without controversy, all men in all religions ought to be moral: and whoever is an immoral man, is a bad man, whatever religion he professeth. A moral man is a valuable person in civil society, and worthy of respect as a neighbour or a subject, even in a private capacity; and much more so, when he is in a public capacity, an officer or a magistrate. But whether morality, as well as several other things I am about to mention, be a sound and sure foundation for eternal life, may be gathered from the whole purport of this discourse. Again, whoever hopes to be saved by praying, reading, fasting, hearing sermons, receiving the sacrament, or by any other religious exercise or duty, that is his faith. Whoever hopes to be saved by vows, pilgrimages, penance, confession, voluntary poverty or celibacy, that is his faith.

faith. Whoever hopes to be saved by good works, as feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, cloathing the naked, visiting the sick, entertaining strangers, ministering to the prisoners, relieving the distressed, visiting and assisting the fatherless and widows, burying the dead, or by any other good works, that is his faith. Whoever hopes to be saved, because he hath gone through such distress of soul, or such exercise of heart or mind, having been so often convinced of sin, and so long and so much burdened, pained and grieved upon that account, that is his faith. Whoever hopes to be saved, because he hath reformed his life, or made a good beginning towards it; or because he is changed and altered, and better than he was before, or better than others, as he himself thinks, that is his faith. Whoever hopes to be saved, because he hath now and then a good thought, and puts up to God a short ejaculation, says a prayer or sheds a tear; or because he hath made or soon purposes to make, a pious resolution to amend his ways and be good, that is his faith. Whoever hopes to be saved, because he thinks that he is justified or sanctified or converted; or for his repenting and believing or acting faith, * or putting forth an act of faith, be it direct or reflex;

* I should not have mentioned such terms, had not several writers made use of them. What good end can it answer to perplex people with such unscriptural expressions? Is it not more plain as well as proper language to say with Jesus Christ, "Believe the gospel," or with St. Paul "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Than to say, *act faith, put forth an act of faith, put forth the appropriating act*. Do the scriptures ever once mention *direct, reflex, appropriating*, or any other *acts* of believing?

flex ; or for an appropriating act, or a four fold act, or any other sort of act of faith ; or for diligently endeavouring to believe, or for the truth and sincerity or soundness of his faith and repentance, or for his orthodoxy, or for the sincerity of his obedience, that is his faith. Whoever hath got a very good conceit of himself, thinking himself to be perfect, or in a higher and better state than others, and so more deserving of God's favour than others, and therefore hopes to be saved, that is his faith. In short, whatever any one hopes to be saved by, be it good or bad, true or false, right or wrong, commanded of God or will-worship and superstition, falling down to the stump of a tree, or worshipping the devil, as some of the heathen do ; any thing done by himself, or done by another man for him, that is his faith, or what he believes in and depends on for salvation.



SECTION V.

On the truth to be believed or the gospel in general.

IT is now time that I come to treat more largely of the most holy faith, the most holy truth of God to be believed, and the most holy person and righteousness of God manifested in the flesh to be believed in. St. Jude exhorts the disciples of Christ earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and to build up themselves thereon. St. Peter calls it "precious faith

(ἡ δικαιοσύνη τῆς Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ)

B 3.

Or,

“in the righteousness of our God and our Saviour
 “Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. i. 1. (For so the words
 of the apostle should have been translated ; Or,) *in the righteousness of Jesus Christ our God and our
 Saviour.* And St. Paul calls it, “the faith of
 “God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the
 “truth, which is after godliness, in hope of e-
 “ternal life.” Tit. i. 1. 2.

The Lord Jesus said unto his apostles, “Go
 “ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to
 “every creature. He that believeth and is bap-
 “tized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not,
 “shall be damned.” Mark xvi. 15, 16. The
 gospel and what it imports are the things which man
 should believe. He that believes the gospel shall
 be saved, but he that believes not the gospel, shall
 be damned ; whatever he may think or believe to
 the contrary. This is the declaration of the great
 judge, whose sentence will be final and irreversibile.

I shall now proceed to set forth more fully what
 the gospel is, and what it imports. And it may
 be of some use to set forth the different terms or
 expressions used in holy scripture to denote the
 same thing ; because unlearned persons are often
 puzzled about words and expressions which have
 the same meaning. And when words or phrases
 are used, to which they are not accustomed, they
 are apt to think that some new truth, doctrine or
 matter, is contained in them.

Now the first intimation of God’s purpose of
 mercy to man after the fall of Adam was in these
 words, part of the sentence pronounced upon the
 serpent the devil, “The seed of the woman
 “*(which signified Christ)* shall bruise thy head,”
 Gen. iii. 15. When God entered into covenant
 with

with Abraham, he made his purpose of mercy more plainly known, declaring by his word of promise to him, and confirming it afterwards by his oath, "That in his seed (*which was Christ*) "all the nations of the earth should be blessed."

Gen. xxii. 16, &c. The apostle Paul useth the word promise, to denote Jesus Christ and what was promised in him. (See Gal. iii. 17, 18.)

The evangelical prophet Isaiah speaks of publishing peace, bringing good tidings of good, publishing salvation. Ch. lii. 7. And he saith,

"Lord, who hath believed our report? Ch. liii.

1. The angel that made known the birth of Jesus Christ unto the shepherds, said unto them,

"Fear not, for behold! I bring you good tidings

"of great joy, which shall be to all people: for

"unto you is born a Saviour, which is Christ

"the Lord." Luke ii. 10, 11. When the

Lord Jesus at his baptism declared, That it became him to fulfil all righteousness, the heavens

were opened, the Spirit of God descended upon him; and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, "This

"is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

"ed." Matt. iii. 15, &c. At this time God

gave testimony and approbation to Christ and to his active obedience. Again, at his transfiguration

on the mount, when Moses and Elias appeared in glory, and spoke of his death, which

he was to suffer at Jerusalem, there came a voice from the excellent glory, saying, "This is my

"beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear

"ye him." Matt. xvii. 1, &c. Luke ix. 28,

&c. 2 Peter i. 17. At this second time God gave

testimony and approbation to Christ and to his

passive obedience; and commanded all men to believe

in

in him and to obey him in all things whatsoever he should command : So Christ himself expounds it. (See John xiv. 1. and Matt. xxviii. 20.) And the scriptures of the new testament set forth, declare and ascertain all those things which he hath taught and commanded.

This revelation, voice or word of God, (whereof the scriptures of the new testament are the only authentick exposition) the Lord Jesus called "the Gospel," and "the Truth," and "the word of the Kingdom." Mark i. 15. John viii. 40. Matt. xiii. 19. For testifying this truth which he heard of God, that he was the beloved Son of God, the jews accused him of blasphemy; because they said, he made himself God. John x. 33. For this they accused him to Pilate as deserving death. John xix. 7. St. John calls this voice of God, "The Father's commandment," and "the truth," and "the witness, record or testimony of God," which he testified of his Son. 2 John iv. and 1 John v. 9, 10. St. Peter calls it, "the word of the Lord," "the truth," and "the holy commandment," (1 Pet. i. 25, 22 : 2 Pet. ii. 21.) and "the word, which God sent unto Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ." Acts x. 36. St. James calls it, "the word of truth," and "the ingrafted word, which is able to save the soul." James i. 18, 21. St. Jude calls this voice from heaven, "the faith once delivered to the saints;" and "the most holy faith." Jude 3, 20. St. Paul calls it, "his gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the commandment of the everlasting God." Rom. xvi. 25, 26; "the testimony of God;" 1 Cor. ii. 1; "the word of reconciliation;" 2 Cor. v. 19 : "the

“ the word of life ;” Phil. ii. 16. “ the word
 “ of the truth of the gospel ;” Col. i. 5 : “ the
 “ word of the Lord ;” 1 Theff. i. 8 : “ the
 “ word of God ;” 1 Theff. ii. 13 : and fre-
 quently “ the faith ;” and “ the word of faith :
 And also, “ the word of salvation ;” and “ the
 “ word of God’s grace, which is able to build
 “ up.” Acts xiii. 26. and xx. 32.

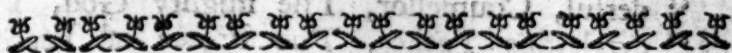
Now all the above expressions, altho’ in different words, denote and mean the same thing. There-
 fore “ to hear him ;” to obey the Father’s com-
 mandment ; to obey the truth ; obedience of
 faith ; to receive the word of the kingdom, the
 ingrafted word, the word of God : or, to believe
 in Jesus Christ, on the Son, or on the name of
 his Son Jesus Christ : faith in the Lord Jesus,
 faith in his blood, faith in his righteousness ; the
 faith of the gospel, the belief of the truth : to
 believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,
 the beloved Son of the living God ; to confess
 that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh : to believe
 the promise, the report, the good tidings of good :
 to believe the truth, the record, the testimony of
 God, the word of life, the word of faith, the
 word of reconciliation, of salvation, or the word
 of God’s grace ; or to believe the gospel, the
 good tidings of great joy, signify all one and the
 same thing. The knowledge of the truth, the
 knowledge of Christ, the knowledge of the Lord ;
 to know Christ, to know the Lord, to know the
 truth, have also the same import. For all these
 scripture-expressions set forth the same matter.

The gospel then is the good pleasure of almighty
 God in his beloved Son, and it is good news from
 heaven of salvation to lost sinners, on account of a
 wonderful

wonderful work ; which the Lord Jesus wrought out and finished. The most High testified his approbation of this work of Christ, both by word and deed. Twice he testified it by a voice from heaven ; and he gave further proof of it, by raising Christ from the dead. The jews, as hath been said, accused the Lord Jesus of blasphemy for saying, that he was the Son of God. For this they judged him to deserve death by law. For when Pilate declared that he found no fault in him ; the jews answered, “ We have a law, and “ by our law he ought to die ; because he made “ himself the Son of God.” John xix. 6, 7. But the living God soon reversed their sentence, and reprov'd their false judgment ; and with power declared him, whom the jews crucified, to be his beloved Son ; “ When he raised him from the “ dead, and set him at his own right hand in the “ heavenly places, far above all principality and “ power, and might, and dominion, and every “ name that is named, not only in this world, “ but also in that which is to come : and put all “ things under his feet, and gave him to be the “ head over all things to the Church. Eph. i. 20. “ &c. That at the name of Jesus every knee “ should bow, of things in heaven, and things “ in earth, and things under the earth ; and that “ every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ “ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. ii. 10, 11.

By the preaching of the gospel, the joyful news of salvation to perishing sinners is to be made known in all the world by the commandment, and upon the word, the truth or the faith of the everlasting God,

SECTION



SECTION VI.

On the import of the gospel.

I SHALL now endeavour to open the import, sense or meaning, of the gospel. To know and understand aright the import of the gospel, is a matter of very great moment: and to misunderstand it, is a matter of very dangerous consequence. Who that profess Christianity, will not be ready to say, that they do believe the gospel, and believe that Jesus is the Christ, and also believe in Jesus Christ? Yet the prophet complained, “Lord, who hath believed our report?” Isa. liii. 1. And God himself saith, “Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days; a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.” Acts xiii. 41. And the judge of quick and dead saith, “Strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matt. vii. 14. And again, “He that believeth the gospel, shall be saved.” And, “He that believeth on him, hath everlasting life.” It is therefore to be feared, that many who think that they believe the gospel, are mistaken; and do not understand the meaning of the gospel.

THIS IS MY BELOVED SON. In these words God reveals the person of Christ, of whom Isaiah saith, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder,

“ shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Isa. ix. 6. From hence it appears that there are two natures in Jesus Christ: with respect to his human nature he is called a child and a son; with respect to his divine nature he is called the mighty God, the everlasting Father: so being both God and Man, he is a fit person to be Mediator between God and men; on which account he is stiled, The Prince of Peace.

Jesus Christ is called, “ The Son of man,” Matt. xvi. 13. “ The man Christ Jesus,” 1 Tim. ii. 5; which names import his Manhood. He is called, “ JEHOVAH,” Isa. xlv. 21, 24, 25. translated “ The LORD,” and interpreted, “ Which is, and which was, and which is to come.” Rev. i. 8. Which imports his underrived being, without cause, without beginning, without end, without change, the Almighty; “ The LORD our God.” Isa. xl. 3. “ The Lord JEHOVAH,” (See the Hebrew, Isa. xl. 10, 11, and compare with John x. 11, &c.) “ The LORD of hosts.” (Compare Isa. vi. 5, and viii. 13. with John xii. 41. and 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7, 8.) “ The Lord from heaven.” 1 Cor. xv. 47. “ God over all.” Rom. ix. 5. Which names import his Godhead. He is also called “ Emanuel.” Matt. i. 23. “ The Word made flesh.” John i. 14. “ God manifested in the flesh.” 1 Tim. iii. 16. “ The Son of God.” John i. 34. Which names import that he is both God and man in one person. “ For in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Coloss. ii. 9. “ Be-

cause

“ cause God was in Christ reconciling the world
 “ unto himself.” 2 Cor. v. 19.

God inhabits or dwells in all his saints, (not essentially, but) by the influence and communication of his spirit; for no creature hath the essence of God. But Jesus Christ hath in himself the essence of God, and the essence of man, a name that none knows but he himself; for he is very and true God, and very and true man, and yet but one person. This union of the Deity with the humanity, when the Word was made flesh, constitutes the person of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

This name “ The Son of God ” imports that Jesus Christ is God, (for every son must necessarily have the same nature with his father); but he is never called the Son of God in the Scriptures, but with respect to his incarnation: therefore this name imports that he is both God and man. He is so called, not merely as God, nor merely as man, but as God and man in one person.

The true Deity hath revealed and distinguished himself by the name of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. But the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost are one God, one infinite, eternal, necessarily self-existing Being, one undivided, inseparable and incommunicable essence, one Jehovah. “ Hear, O Israel, (Jehovah our
 “ Aleim is one Jehovah) the Lord our God is
 “ one Lord.” Deut. vi. 4. Mark xii. 29. The Hebrew word translated God (whether it be read Aleim, or Alehim, or Elohim, and whatever be the sense of it; for I enter not into the controversy either about the reading or the sense of the word) is in the plural number. And the scrip-
 C
 ture

ture intimates a plural distinction in the Godhead. " And God (Aleim) said, Let us make " man in our image after our likeness " Gen. i. 26. " And the Lord God (Jehovah Aleim) " said, Behold the man is become as one of us." Gen. iii. 22. St. John (supposing he wrote the words) saith, " There are three that bear record " in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the " Holy Ghost; and these three are one." 1 John v. 7.

The Greek words are *οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς*, *these the three*. Since the fourth century it hath been usual to call them *three persons* or hypostases. But when this way of speaking first began, it was opposed by all the orthodox, and accounted heresy, and caused great contention in the church for a long time. Even in the council of *Nice* it was deemed heresy to maintain three hypostases in the Godhead: for the word hypostasis was then understood to signify essence or substance. But towards the end of the fourth century, the Greek bishops agreed to call them *τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις*, and the Latin bishops agreed to call them *tres personæ*, *three persons*. Time and custom may change the sense of words, but God changeth not. St. John is the only inspired writer who expressly calls them three; but he neither calls them three Gods nor three persons. And his words *τρεῖς οἱ μαρτυροῦντες* are in the masculine gender, but *ὑποστάσις* is of the feminine gender, and *πρόσωπον* the proper Greek word for person, is of the neuter gender: so that neither of these words agree with the words of holy scripture.

Person hath been defined by some, *A thing subsisting by itself, which is not part of another*; and by others, *The individual substance of a rational nature*.

nature. And do not the words *three persons* naturally convey the ideas of three separate individuals? Are not many hereby led into wrong conceptions about God; as if the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost were, and existed separately, as three individual human persons; And is not this Tritheism? Do not the generality speak of the Father as if he existed separately and independently of, and was some how greatly superior to the Word and the Holy Ghost? And doth not this indicate as if they thought the Father to be the great God, and the Word and the Holy Ghost to be two demi-gods? How contrary is this to the solemn declaration of the Most High! "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Aleim is one "Jehovah." Is not such confusion the consequence of calling the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, *three persons*?

But there are other men who are clear of such confused ideas about the Godhead; and though in compliance with custom they use the words *three persons*; yet they intend no more thereby than the distinction and the offices in the Godhead.

I leave it to the consideration of every reader, Whether, in speaking of the unsearchable mystery of the Godhead, it be better to speak in words "Which man's wisdom teacheth," or in words "Which the Holy Ghost teacheth?" 1 Cor. ii. 13.

Though there be a distinction in the Godhead, there is no separate or divided existence. In setting forth the distinction it may be said, The Father is neither the Word, nor the Holy Ghost; the Father is distinct from the Word and the

Holy Ghost; the Father exists and subsists by and with the Word and the Holy Ghost, but neither separately nor independently; for where the Father is, there is the Word, and the Holy Ghost. The Word is neither the Father, nor the Holy Ghost; the Word is distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost; the Word exists and subsists by and with the Father and the Holy Ghost, but neither separately nor independently; for where the Word is, there is the Father, and the Holy Ghost. For it is written, "The Word was made flesh." John i. 14. And, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." John iii. 34. And Jesus said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The Father dwelleth in me." John xiv. 9, 10. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Coloss. ii. 9. The Holy Ghost is neither the Father, nor the Word; the Holy Ghost is distinct from the Father and the Word; the Holy Ghost exists and subsists by and with the Father and the Word, but neither separately nor independently; for where the Holy Ghost is, there is the Father, and the Word. For it is written, "My Father will love him, and WE will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John xiv. 23. And, "Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." 1 Cor. iii. 16. And, "In whom, that is in Christ, you also are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. ii. 22. "The Holy Ghost dwelleth in us." 2 Tim. i. 14. "God dwelleth in us." 1 John iv. 12.

These

These three exist together in one essence, without any superiority, inferiority, or inequality of nature. And if that which is said with respect to the office or work of the Father, the office or work of the Word, and the office or work of the Holy Ghost, be understood as if it respected the essence of the Father, the essence of the Word, and the essence of the Holy Ghost, it will lead into gross error. These three are "The holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Rev. iv. 8. These three, however distinguished from one another by name, office, operation, or mode of existence, concurred in the creation, and in the redemption. And every work of these three is the work of Jehovah, who necessarily exists, and is eternal, infinite, and incomprehensible. How * these three exist together in one essence, or wherein the distinction consists, is not the subject of our faith; but that these three do exist together, and are one Jehovah, the one God. These three are Jehovah Aleim, whom alone Israel was commanded to hear, to fear, to serve, to love, to cleave to, and to worship. (See Deut. v. 6, 7. and vi. 4, 5, 13. and x. 20, &c.) "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Luke iv. 8.

C 3.

These

* The Deity is infinite, and therefore incomprehensible, so that the mode of his existence cannot be fully set forth by any thing. But perhaps, fire, light, and air, give the best illustration thereof, that nature affords. These three are distinct from one another, they operate differently, but they can neither act nor subsist separately and independently. But this is mentioned with deference, and not insisted on.

These three are the covenant-making God, who to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his will or counsel to save them (ἀμεταβλητότης ἐπαγγελίας) mediated or became a mediator by oath. Heb. vi. 17. These three are the Father of Israel, that is, of all the children of God of all ages, and of all nations; who hath fully and effectually provided for their salvation by a covenant, which is everlasting, ordered in all things and sure. The thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah sets forth what is here advanced. In the first verse, Jehovah saith, "I will be the Aleim of all the families of Israel:" and in the ninth verse, he saith, "For I am a father to Israel." Therefore the Lord Jesus frequently called God, the Father, and he also taught his disciples to call him so. But he would not allow that privilege to the carnal Jews. John viii. 41, &c.

It may be remarked, that the name Father, when applied to God, hath not always the same distinct sense. Christ is called "The everlasting Father. Isa. ix. 6. "Thy Father that hath bought thee." Deut. xxxii. 6. The revealing or teaching of the Holy Ghost, is called the revealing, drawing, or teaching of the Father. For Jesus said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Matt. xvi. 17. And, "No man can come to me, except the Father draw him:" And, "Every man that hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." John vi. 44, 45. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." 1 Cor. ii. 10, &c. It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost. Luke ii. 26. "The Holy Ghost shall teach you all things." John xiv. 26. The

The whole Godhead is Father, and is called Father with respect to the humanity of Jesus Christ. At the incarnation, when the Word came into the world to take part of flesh and blood, he said, "Lo, I come." Heb. x. 5, 7. And the Holy Ghost came upon the Virgin Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her; and therefore that holy thing to be born of her was to be called the Son of God. Luke i. 35. "The Jews sought to kill Jesus, because he said, that God was his Father." John v. 18. Jesus said, "The Son can do nothing of himself." John v. 19. "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." Matt. xx. 23. "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." John xx. 17. "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father." Matt. xvi. 27. And, "Whoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." Mark viii. 38. St. Paul saith, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ." Eph. i. 3.

The whole Godhead is called Father with respect to the church, and all the members of the church are called children of God. For Jehovah saith, "I am a Father to Israel." Jer. xxxi. 9. And Christ saith, "Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven." Matt. xxiii. 9. And St. Paul saith, "To us there is but one God the Father."

“ ther.” 1 Cor. viii. 6. And, “ I will be a Father
 “ unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters,
 “ saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Cor. vi. 18.

The Lord’s prayer, *Our Father*, is an address to Jehovah Aleim, the whole Godhead, who hath promised to be a Father to all his people.

When the name Father is placed in distinction from the Word and the Holy Ghost, it means one of the divine Three : and it may be said according to the scripture, the Father is Jehovah, Lord and God ; the Word is Jehovah, Lord and God ; the Holy Ghost is Jehovah, Lord and God. But to say that these three, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, are three Jehovahs, three Lords, or three Gods, is contradictory to the whole Scripture ; and as great an error as to say that Jesus Christ is a created God, a delegated God, or a begotten God. The Father is God, but not man. The Holy Ghost is God, but not man. The Word was God, and the Word incarnate is both God and man. This is the beloved Son, the first begotten and the only begotten Son of God : not begotten before all worlds (for the human soul and body of Christ had no pre-existence) but begotten that day, when the Word came into the world to take part of flesh and blood. Heb. ii. 14. x. 5. When the Holy Ghost came upon the blessed virgin Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her. “ Therefore (said the angel unto her) that
 “ holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall
 “ be called the Son of God.” Luke i. 35. Mark this ; there was in fact no well-beloved only-begotten Son of God before the incarnation of God the Word.

The

The Word is no where in the Scriptures called the Son of God, but with respect to his incarnation. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.—And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." John i. 1, 2, 3, 14, 18. The disciples saw the humanity of the Word, but not his Deity. Therefore Jesus said unto them, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." John xiv. 7, &c. In the former of these passages of Scripture, St. John, who asserts the Deity of the Word, doth not call him the Son, till he speaks of his incarnation. In the latter passage our Lord maintains that he is not only man, but also God, and that the Godhead and the manhood are united in his own person. And therefore he said, "I and the Father are one." John x. 30. In the three places last quoted, I conceive that "The Father" means the whole Godhead.

He that eternally existed in the form or essence of God, in time took the form of a servant. "He took part of flesh and blood; he took hold of or apprehended the seed of Abraham." Heb.

Heb. ii. 14, 16. "When the fullness of time
 was come, God sent forth his Son made of
 a woman, made under the law." Gal. iv. 4.
 The Word was never created, or made, or be-
 gotten, nor began to be. He is the essence exist-
 ing, the cause of all causes, the first and the last,
 Jehovah the most high God. But the Son of
 God was begotten or made of a woman, when
 the Word was made flesh. "Thou art my Son,
 this day have I begotten thee," relates to the
 incarnation of the Word. *Englebert*, translated
 "this day or to day," signifies a certain day.
 (Compare Heb. i. 5. v. 5. Acts xiii. 33, with
 Heb. iv. 7.) "This day" appertains to time,
 but not to eternity. The begetting relates en-
 tirely to the humanity of the Word. Eternal ge-
 neration is an absurdity: for generation is a pro-
 duction. But whatever was produced had a be-
 ginning. And whatever had a beginning was
 not from eternity. The apostle Paul applies the
 above passage, which is in the second psalm, to
 the resurrection of Jesus. Acts xiii. 33. Jesus
 Christ was the Son of God from the time when
 the Word was incarnate; but he was declared or
 demonstrated to be the Son of God with power,
 by the resurrection from the dead. (See Rom. i.
 3, 4.) Many things were spoken of Christ by
 way of prophecy (for "God calleth the things
 that be not, as though they were") which
 were not accomplished before the Word was in-
 carnate. And since the incarnation, some things
 are spoken of the Son, which were done by the
 Word before the incarnation, as the making of
 the worlds. All things were made by Jesus
 Christ as Jehovah, and for him as the beloved
 Son, God manifested in the flesh. Many

Many men, who intended to defend the eternal divinity of Jesus Christ, have hurt the cause by maintaining, that the Son of God was begotten before all worlds. Where is it to be found so written in God's holy word, unless one can believe the council of Basil, *That the bishops decrees in councils are God's public inspired word?*

God said with respect to the incarnation and humanity of the Word, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son," Heb. i. 5. Isaiah said, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isa. vii. 14. How could he, who as a son, was conceived, made, and born of a woman, exist or be a son, before his mother that bore him?

Jehovah Aleim, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, purposed, determined, decreed or covenanted before all worlds, from all eternity, that the Word should in due time assume man's nature to redeem lost sinners. In this sense Christ was set up from everlasting; and by virtue of this eternal purpose or covenant of Jehovah Aleim, the people of God were saved before the incarnation of the Word, by what he did and suffered, when he came into the world and dwelt among his creatures. But God's assuming man's nature in fact, was a new thing in the earth, and therefore not done before all worlds. Jeremiah said, "The Lord (Jehovah) will create a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man or the mighty one." Jer. xxxi. 22. And this great and wonderful work, the incarnation of the Word (which holy scripture sets forth by begetting, creating, making, preparing or

or sitting a body, taking part in flesh and blood, being manifest in the flesh. appearing in the likeness of sinful flesh, being found in fashion as a man, apprehending or taking hold of the seed of Abraham, the seed of the woman, a virgin's conceiving, encompassing the mighty one. &c.) was the work of Jehovah Aleim: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost jointly concurred in it.

Athanasius saith (if he be the author of that creed that goes by his name) "*That our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man: equal to the Father as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood: who although he be God and man; yet he is not two, but one Christ.*" Herein he speaks according to the Scripture. But he saith, *The Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten.* The Son, as SON, is the Son of Jehovah Aleim and of Mary, a highly favoured virgin, who knew no man, blessed among women. And in this respect it may be said, according to the scripture, that he was made or created, as well as begotten: for it was altogether a supernatural work, most holy, and divine. But it will be replied, that *Athanasius* speaks of the Godhead of the Son. Granted; for he further saith in very plain words, *God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds.* This is indeed a great mistake, and inconsistent with *Athanasius's* own words and doctrine, *In this trinity none is afore or after other.* For he that begets, must necessarily be afore him that is begotten: and he that is begotten must necessarily be after him that begat him. A begotten God; if there be such a God, must needs

needs be another God, and a younger God, than his Father. If this were so, then it would hold true, that the Son as God is of the Father, God of God, very God of very God : but then there would be two Gods. This is new doctrine, unknown to Israel of old ; “ Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Aleim is one Jehovah.”

St. John saith, “ The Word was with God, “ and was God,” which imports his coessentiality, coeternity, and coequality with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost. But *of the Father, of God*, import derivation ; as if the Son as God was originated. The Word is no more of the Father, than the Father is of the Word, or of the Holy Ghost. Neither is the Holy Ghost of the Father, and of the Son, as *Athanasius* saith. But the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, our Aleim, are one Jehovah, one undivided essence or Godhead. When our Lord speaks of the Spirit’s proceeding from the Father, and of his sending the Spirit unto his disciples (John xv. 26. and xvi. 7.) he doth not speak of the essence of the Holy Ghost, but of his office in the plan of man’s redemption. It hath been remarked, that by “ The Father” is sometimes meant the whole Godhead. In this sense it may be said, the Word or Son is of the Father or of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost is of the Father or of the Godhead. It may also be said, the Father is of the Godhead.

The authors of the *Nicene* creed also say, that the Son of God was *begotten of his Father before all worlds* : and consistently therewith (but derogatorily to the honour of the glorious Jehovah) they have called him *God of God, Light of Light,*

very God of very God. Where is he thus called in the holy scriptures? And what great difference is there between a begotten God, and a created God?

Is it not clearly revealed in the Scriptures, that the Son of God himself as Son is to deliver up the kingdom, and to be subject to him that did put all things under him? 1 Cor. xv. 24, &c. If then it be maintained, that the Son of God was begotten as God, Doth it not thence follow that there must be another God who was before him, and begat him; from whom he derives his origin, and who must necessarily be older at least, if not greater than he?

However well some men meant by maintaining the eternal generation or sonship of Jesus Christ, and that his proper divinity consists herein, that he as God was begotten of the substance of his Father; they have advanced an argument, which proves a generation and a plurality of Gods, which makes their doctrine of the Trinity inconsistent with itself, and which overthrows the unoriginated self-existent Godhead of Jesus Christ. This they might not intend. This error subverts the whole gospel. For, God manifested in the flesh is the pillar and ground of the truth, and the rock on which the church stands. "Do ye thus requite the Lord (Jehovah, the rock?) Is he not thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?" See Deut. xxxiii. 4, 6. Doth the bible speak of a higher God, or an older God, or any other God, than Adonai Jehovah, Jehovah Elohim, &c? Was JEHOVAH made or begotten?

All

All that is said in holy scripture of the inferiority of the Son to the Father, of his being begotten of the Father, made and born of a woman, sent forth, serving, receiving honour and glory and power, being highly exalted, having a name given above every name, delivering up the kingdom, and being subject to the Father, belongs either to the humanity of the Word, or to his office in the oeconomy of man's redemption. But let it be remembered, that Jesus Christ the Son of God is but one person, in whom the divine and the human nature are united. God the Word, who at the creation said, "Let there be light, and there was light; who spake, and it was done; who commanded and it stood fast;" said also when he came into the world, "A body hast thou prepared me, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." See Heb. x. 5, 7.

Jesus Christ is the glory and the character of that God, whom the apostle Paul preached unto the Hebrews. But if Jesus Christ be not Jehovah or God manifested in the flesh, he would not be the object of divine worship: it would be idolatry to worship him. For the Israelites were forbid to make any image of God, or to worship any God, but Jehovah Aleim. (See Deut. xiii. and Exod. xx.) But God hath commanded angels and men to worship Jesus Christ. "When he bringeth the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. i. 6. "Worship him, all ye Gods." Psalm xcvi. 7. "For he is thy Lord, and worship thou him." Psalm xlv. 11. "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father." John v. 23. "At the name of Jesus

“ Jesus every knee should bow, of things in
 “ heaven, and things in earth, and things under
 “ the earth.” Philipp. ii. 10. The apostles wor-
 shipped him : Luke xxiv. 52. Matt. xxviii. 17.
 He that worships Christ, worships the Father
 in spirit and in truth ; for Christ is the spirit and
 truth, the substance of all the ceremonial worship.
 Those who make a difference between worship-
 ping Christ and worshipping the Father, as if it
 was not equally worshipping the true God, want
 that understanding which is given to those who
 obtain like precious faith with the apostles. 1
 John v. 20. “ All the fulness of the Godhead
 “ dwelleth in Christ bodily.” Coloss. ii. 9.
 Therefore he that knows Christ, knows God even
 the Father. He that believes in Christ, believes
 in God. He that loves Christ, loves God. He
 that hates Christ, hates God even the Father.
 He that serves Christ, serves God. He that prays
 to Christ, prays to God. He that hath Christ,
 hath God, even fellowship with the Father, the
 Word, and the Holy Ghost. And he that is
 without Christ, is without God.

This is the Redeemer, the Messiah, Shiloh,
 the Mediator, the man that is God’s fellow, and
 God’s servant, David’s Lord, and David’s son,
 the seed of the woman who hath bruised the ser-
 pent’s head, the desire of all nations, the King
 of kings, and the Lord of lords, the holy One,
 (Acts iii. 14.) the effulgence of the glory, and
 the express image or character of Jehovah Aleim.
 (See the greek. Heb. i. 3.)

St. James calleth him, “ The Lord of glory.”
 James ii. 1. St. Thomas called him, “ Lord

“ and

“ and God.” John xx. 28. St. Jude calls him
 (τοῦ μόνου ἀριστοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ)
 the only Sovereign our God and Lord Jesus
 Christ. Jude 4. St. Peter calls him, “ Our
 “ God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter
 i. 1. St. Paul calls him, “ The great God
 “ and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Titus ii.
 13. St. John calls him, “ The true God and
 “ eternal life ; and he adds, “ Keep yourselves
 “ from idols.” 1 John v. 20, 21. For there is
 no other God but one, who hath manifested him-
 self in Christ, and dwells in Christ:

This is the beloved Son, the holy child Jesus
 (Jehovah the Saviour) Christ (the anointed the
 most holy, Dan. ix. 24.) the prophet, the priest,
 and the king of the church of God, which he
 hath purchased with his own blood. “ He is
 “ the rock, his work is perfect.” Deut. xxxiii. 4.
 On this rock the church is built, and the gates
 of hell shall not prevail against it. Matt. xvi. 18.
 “ Fear not,” (said the once despised Nazarene that
 was crucified without the gate, but is now the
 exalted King of glory) “ I am the first and the
 “ last : I am he that liveth and was dead ; and
 “ behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and
 “ have the keys of hell and of death.” Rev. i.
 17, 18. “ I the Lord, Jehovah, and there is
 “ no God, (Aleim or Elohim,) else beside me,
 “ a just God and a Saviour ; there is none beside
 “ me. Look unto me, and ye shall be saved, all
 “ the ends of the earth : for I am God, and
 “ there is none else.” Isa. xlv. 21, 22. “ I am
 “ Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end-
 “ ing faith, the Lord, which is, and which was, and
 “ which is to come, the Almighty.” Rev. i. 8.

Thus much as to the first part of the gospel or the testimony of God concerning the person of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED,

In these words God reveals the righteousness of Christ, with which alone God is well pleased, and by which alone sinners are justified and saved. Isaiah saith, "The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness sake, he will magnify the law, and make it honourable." Isa. xlii. 21. The righteousness of Christ means his active and passive obedience or what he did and suffered: he obeyed the law most perfectly, and so fulfilled all righteousness; and he died to atone for sin by his blood, and thereby satisfied divine justice, which no creature could do.

Adam the first man, the head and father of all mankind, was made a righteous, holy and happy man. But Adam was made under a law; and his happiness depended upon his keeping that law of his Creator. Death was the penalty annexed to the transgression of that law of Jehovah, who is glorious in holiness. Adam did transgress that law of the most God. By Adam's disobedience, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men in him, in whom all did sin. The whole human race was then in the loins of Adam, who was both their natural and their federal head. Therefore Adam and all in him were at once ruined, lost and undone by his fall. For by Adam's offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation; because by his disobedience they were made sinners by the constitution of that law, under which both he and all in him were made. Adam could not make atone-
ment

ment for his sin ; for he could not satisfy the justice of the offended infinite Jehovah. All Adam's offspring were in the same unhappy situation, being under the curse of a broken law, guilty of rebellion against the most HIGH by the transgression of his law, and therefore dead men in law by the sentence of the law : and being dead men in law they were not capable of doing any thing good in law. But by the grace of God, the free gift of Christ, and of his righteousness, and of abundance of grace given in him, came upon believers of all ages and of all nations unto justification of life through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and by that righteousness alone, all that believe in him are made righteous by the constitution of another law of Jehovah, which is called the law of faith. (See Rom. v. 12. to the end.)

The apostle Paul in the three first chapters of the epistle to the Romans maintains that all men, both jews and gentiles, are under sin. And he sets forth their universal depravity and wickedness.

“ There is none righteous, no not one. There
 “ is none that understandeth, there is none that
 “ seeketh after God. They are all gone out of
 “ the way, they are together become unprofitable,
 “ there is none that doeth good, no not one.
 “ Their throat is an open sepulcher ; with their
 “ tongues they have used deceit, the poison of
 “ asps is under their lips. Whose mouth is full
 “ of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift
 “ to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in
 “ their ways ; and the way of peace have they
 “ not known. There is no fear of God before
 “ their eyes. There is no difference : for all have
 “ sinned,

“ sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” And this being the case, he sets forth, that there is no other way whereby any man can be saved, but by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.

If men were not sinners, they would not stand in need of a Saviour. Therefore the Lord Jesus said unto the pharisees, who were disgusted with him for eating with publicans and sinners, “ They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice : for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Matt. ix. 12, 13. And upon another occasion, when the people murmured at him, saying, “ That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner ; he said, The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke xix. 7, 10. And to the pharisees, who hoped well of themselves on account of their own righteousness ; and thought well of themselves on account of their good character in the world ; he said, “ That which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.” Luke xvi. 15. St. Paul saith, “ That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” 1 Tim. i. 15. And again, “ That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them : and that he made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for sinners ; that they might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Cor. v. 19, 21. And that Christ is made of God to them that believe, “ wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption : that, according

“ cording as it is written, He that glorieth, let
 “ him glory in the Lord.” 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.

St. Peter also saith, that precious faith is, “ in
 “ the righteousness of our God and our Saviour
 “ Jesus Christ.”

The prophet Jeremiah calls the Messiah, “ The
 “ Lord our righteousness.” Behold ! the days
 “ come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto
 “ David a righteous branch, and a king shall
 “ reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment
 “ and justice in the earth. In his days Judah
 “ shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely :
 “ and this is his name whereby HE shall be called,
 “ THE LORD (*Jehovah*) OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. He also calls the Church, the
 Bride of Christ, by the same name ; as it is
 usual for a woman, when she marries, to take
 her husband’s name : “ This is the name where-
 “ with SHE shall be called, The Lord our
 “ righteousness.” Jer. xxxiii. 16. The prophet
 Isaiah saith, “ Unto me (*that is unto Jesus Jeho-*
 “ *vah*) every knee shall bow, every tongue shall
 “ swear ; surely he shall say of me, in the Lord
 “ is all righteousness and strength.” (*So it is ren-*
dered in the margin.) And, “ In the Lord shall
 “ all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory.”

See Isaiah xlv. 23, 24, 25. And the Lord God
 saith, that the righteousness of his people is of him-
 self. Isa. liv. 17. St. John expounds the voice
 from heaven, “ Hear ye him,” which he calls
 the Father’s commandment ; “ That we should
 “ believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.”

1 John iii. 23, & V. 13. Now the Name of
 Jesus Christ is, “ THE LORD (*JEHOVAH*) OUR
 “ RIGHTEOUSNESS :” who hath executed judg-
 ment

ment and justice : who hath fulfilled and satisfied every demand of law and justice. He is also called, " The just God and the Saviour." Isa. xlv. 21. " Who hath finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness." Dan. ix. 24. " And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey (or hear) him." Heb. v. 9. From the above scriptures it appears, that to believe in, or on Christ's Name, implies trusting, relying or depending on his Righteousness for salvation.

Man was originally made to live by his own righteousness. By the light of nature, and of his own conscience he knows no other way. There is also in every man a very strong natural bias or propensity to be saved thereby. But the truth is, " There is none righteous, no, not one." " For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 10, 23. If any one could fulfil the whole law of God, he would live thereby. But alas ! " the carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh (*under the law, working for life, unregenerate and unbelieving*) cannot please God." Rom. viii. 7, 8. " Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh (*neither man nor woman*) be justified." Rom. iii. 20.

God is merciful, but he is also just ; and he cannot shew mercy but in harmony with his justice. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity ; he cannot forgive sin without satisfaction ; he cannot justify but by a perfect righteousness. Fallen man cannot make satisfaction or atonement for sin ;

sin; neither can he work out a perfect righteousness. How should he? He is a dead man in law, being under the curse of the law; and he hath neither heart nor strength to keep the law. The law is holy, just and good: but fallen man is sold under sin, an enemy to God, and hath no good thing dwelling in him. The merciful God hath given his Son, who hath made atonement for sin and wrought out a perfect righteousness. Truth and mercy have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other in God's beloved Son. The just God can now justify the ungodly who believe in Jesus; and be just in doing so. This is the way, the only way of salvation for sinners.

Whoever then thinks, believes or hopes, to be saved by any thing of his own, less or more: or, whoever thinks or believes that any thing less or more is requisite to obtain the favour of God, to find acceptance, or to make peace with him; than what Jesus Christ hath done and finished long ago, " (When he made peace thro' the blood of his cross." Col. i. 10.) neither believes nor understands the gospel aright. For the import of the gospel of God, or the truth and testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ, is, that God almighty is well pleased, and fully satisfied, with the work of his beloved Son; that work, which the Father gave him to do; that work, which the Son said he had finished; and what he attested with his latest breath. (See John xvii. 4. & xix. 30.) This work was to fulfil all righteousness, both the moral and ceremonial law; to do the whole will of God in every thing; and to be obedient even unto death, thereby to make atonement for sin by his own most holy and precious blood.

blood. The Lord Jesus fully satisfied every demand of the law. He obeyed all its commands and precepts, and he suffered all its pains and penalties. Hereby the law was magnified and made honourable. Jehovah is well pleased with this honourable and glorious work of Christ; because consistently with his justice he can shew mercy.

This work of Christ, his most perfect and divine righteousness; his obedience in all things, and even unto death, (for the Father gave commandment to him to lay down his life; and therefore doth the Father love him: see John x. 17, 18) is the whole and alone cause of the salvation of sinners. There needs no other requisite, neither less nor more; neither little nor great. This alone is compleat and all-sufficient. And all of all nations, and of all ranks and stations of men, and of all religions, that have been saved from Adam's fall to this time; and all that ever will be saved from this moment to the end of the world; have been saved, and will be saved, for no other cause or reason, than this work of Jesus Christ, called the righteousness of God: and the blood and righteousness of Christ: and by many writers, the active and passive obedience of Christ; and in plain words, what Christ did and suffered on earth in the flesh. And whoever hath any other ground of hope, confidence, glorying or rejoicing, then the gospel; or, whoever believes or hopes to be saved by any other name, or way, or means, than by Jesus Christ, and this his work, is in unbelief, and on a false foundation. For, "There is none
 "other name under heaven given among men,
 "whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12.
 "For other foundation can no man lay, than that
 "is

“ is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” I Cor. iii. 11. For he alone is “ The way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father but by him.” John xiv. 6..

The gospel publisheth, declares, and makes known, a free and full salvation to men of all nations, and of all sorts, upon believing it. Whoever then thinks, believes, or hopes to be accepted with God, and saved, for or by any of the things above-mentioned, when I spoke of religious faith : or, whoever thinks and believes, that any thing whatsoever must be connected or joined with the work of Jesus Christ, as if what he had ~~done~~ was not sufficient of itself ; either doth not believe the gospel at all, or doth not understand the import of the gospel. Whoever thinks and maintains, that any thing else is necessary, either in point of acceptance, or in point of dependence, than believing God’s testimony concerning Christ and his work, and believing in Jesus Christ and his work : either never knew the grace of God in truth, or he perverts the gospel, and is become corrupt and unsound in the faith.

People may think, and they may say, that they believe the gospel ; and yet not understand the meaning of it. The Lord Jesus makes it a characteristick of the good-ground hearers, or of true believers, that they understand the word of the kingdom. Many hear it ; some in a sense believe it ; but the real children of God alone, who are born of God, understand it, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. See Matt. xiii. 19 & 23. & Luke viii. 15.) Whosoever then denies either the Godhead, or the manhood of Christ, or the

sufficiency of his righteousness to save sinners, doth not understand the gospel.

When Adam had sinned, he had no ground to hope for mercy, till God gave intimation of a Saviour for sinners. The glorious gospel of the blessed God is the only sure ground of hope for sinners. He that believes the gospel with understanding, as the truth of God, hath good ground to hope for eternal life. But he that trusts in any thing else, makes lies his refuge; and his hope is the hope of the hypocrite, that will perish.

When the gospel was first preached, the infidel jews bitterly opposed it, maintaining that the works of the law were sufficient for salvation. Many judaizing christians allowed the necessity of faith in Christ; but they also thought and taught, that it was necessary to be circumcised and to keep the law, thinking thereby to mend the matter. And indeed their doctrine gave less offence; and appeared more reasonable, as it is also more agreeable to the nature of man, to do something towards his own salvation, than to be saved absolutely by grace. 'Tis common enough to hear many, called christians, now a-days maintain, That we must do what we can, (*but who doth so?*) and Christ must make up. Few indeed, that make any pretence to christianity, will down right maintain in exprefs words, that the work of Christ was no way at all necessary to procure the favour of God, or contributed nothing towards the salvation of sinners. Yet the generality seem to lay very little stress upon it: some next to none at all, if any at all: they lay the greatest stress upon something else. And even those, who lay some stress upon it, more or less, connect something else with it, where-

whereon they also lay some stress, more or less. So that they do not believe that God is well and fully pleased with the work of Christ, as alone sufficient for salvation without any thing else at all; but that God is placable, or willing to come to terms with them; upon condition that they themselves first perform those other things, which they think requisite and necessary, either in whole or in part, as preliminaries to make peace with God. So that most men, even in christendom, are still hoping to be saved more or less, either in whole or in part, by some or other of the things above-mentioned: and that, as hath afore been shewn, is their faith; and not the gospel of God. All such doctrine the apostle Paul vehemently opposes; and maintains, that such, as are for being saved by doing at all, are under obligation to keep the whole law: and such as connect any thing at all with the work of Christ, in point of acceptance, or of justification, pervert the gospel, and frustrate the grace of God; the absolute, unconditional, sovereign grace of God, given to sinners in Christ Jesus, before the world began. This appears sufficiently plain from St. Paul's writings, particularly the epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and 2 Tim. i. 9.

If any should object, and say; that the Lord Jesus and the apostles connected repentance with faith and remission of sins; I allow it. Repentance and faith are duties required by the gospel; because God commands all men every where to repent, and to believe the gospel. (See Acts xvii. 30. Mark i. 15. Rom. xvi. 26.) It is man's duty to do whatever God commands. Repentance to life is the change made upon the mind by the

gospel, when a man is turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. He turns from the evil of his ways ; but his eyes being opened, or his understanding being enlightened by the gospel, he ceases to work for acceptance ; he turns, (contrary to his natural propensity, which is to establish and live by his own righteousness) to God, believing that he is well pleased in his beloved Son. He denies himself, he renounces his self-righteousness, he is ashamed of it, he believes in Jesus Christ, and his divine righteousness. Then he can say of his own righteousness, by which he had thought to get to heaven, that he counts it loss for Christ. This repentance, as well as faith, is the gift of God : Acts v. 31. And they are both given at the same time. Thus much as to the second part of the gospel or testimony of God concerning the work of Christ ; setting forth why God is well pleased in his beloved Son, and what glad tidings of great joy it imports. HEAR YE HIM will be explained hereafter.

XX

SECTION VII.

On Faith and the assurance of Faith.

I SHALL now in the next place endeavour to set forth what the faith of the gospel is, and also what assurance of faith meaneth. Now the faith of the gospel is not a belief that a man is justified, or shall most certainly be saved, or that Christ died for him in particular : but the faith, belief or believing of the gospel, is a persuasion of
mind

mind that the gospel is true ; yea, the very truth of God. It is the believing of God's faithful testimony concerning his Son Jesus Christ, and upon God's authority and at God's command believing in Jesus Christ and his righteousness. The assurance of faith is a firm, full, assured persuasion or conviction of mind of the truth of the gospel. It is believing without doubting, staggering, or wavering. It is being fully satisfied in the mind of the truth of the gospel. To believe the gospel is to be persuaded or convinced that the gospel is true.

It hath been already said, That to believe any thing is to be persuaded or convinced in the mind, that that thing is true ; and that no one can rationally believe any thing without some proof or evidence for it. And no wise man can believe a thing with satisfaction of mind, unless he knows and understands the matter, and hath good proof for it. If a person believe the gospel upon the testimony of man, his faith is human faith ; but if a person believe the gospel upon the testimony of God, his faith is divine faith. Some are weak, others are strong in the faith. But all that believe the gospel unfeignedly, are equally justified, whether their faith be strong or weak. " All that believe are justified from all things through Jesus Christ." Acts xiii. 39. " Him that is weak in the faith, receive." Rom. xiv. 1.

Some modern writers have defined faith to be *a confidence that Christ loved me and gave himself for me.* But this not a true definition of faith. This is not the faith of the gospel, tho' it hath passed current for it with many for a long time. It hath been a prevailing, though not universal opinion ;

yet nevertheless it is a mistake. It must indeed be granted, that if a person can say, that Christ hath loved him and given himself for him, upon as good ground as the apostle Paul said it of himself, that he is a true believer. Yet it is presumed, that many believe the gospel and will be saved; who neither can in truth, nor dare say with the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. ii. 20. The apostle is here speaking of his conformity to Christ, of his living to Christ, or obeying him out of love; and of his living by Christ, or by believing in him; (not living by his own believing, but by what he believed of the Son of God; which presupposes his believing the gospel :) and then he asserts, what implies the knowledge of his own personal interest in Christ, that Christ loved him, and lived and died for him: so that the apostle declares both his faith and his hope together. I hope hereafter to make it clearly appear from scripture, that no one hath the assurance of his eternal salvation upon his first believing the gospel. It will be granted, that no one can be assured that he shall be eternally saved, without any possibility of falling away, but by the sealing, witness or testimony of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost bears witness to the truth in the hearts of men, when they first believe the gospel. And afterwards when their faith works by love, he bears witness with their spirits that they are children of God. But the knowledge of a personal interest in Christ belongs to the assurance of hope; which hath frequently been

been called *faith of assurance*. But there is no such expression in all the bible, *as faith of assurance*. There is, “ the full assurance of the understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God.” Coloss. ii. 2. And, “ our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” 1 Thess. i. 5. And, “ let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,” (*which means full assurance of the truth of the gospel*) Heb. x. 22. And there is, “ The effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever.” Isaiah xxxii. 17. And, “ The full assurance of *hope* unto the end,” Heb. vi. 11. which means such a full persuasion of being eternally saved as casts out all doubt, and the tormenting fear of falling away. But the above definition of faith, and faith of assurance, are unscriptural. And such a mistake hath arisen hence, that the faith of the gospel, and the hope of the gospel, have been confounded together, as if they both were but one and the same thing. But tho’ faith, hope, and charity, be nearly related; and produced in the soul at the same time: yet nevertheless they are distinct from one another. Faith is neither hope nor charity. Hope is neither charity nor faith. Charity is neither faith nor hope. He that hath the faith of the gospel, hath also the hope of the gospel in some measure, more or less; and also charity. Yet as there is a difference in degrees betwixt faith, and full assurance of faith, or betwixt weak faith and strong faith; so there is also a great difference in degrees betwixt hope, and the full assurance of hope. A person may be fully assured, thoroughly

satisfied

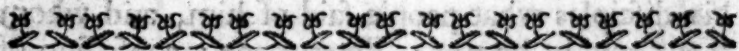
satisfied in his mind, that the gospel is the truth of God ; and he may have hope, a good hope, that he may be saved ; altho' he hath neither confidence nor full assurance, that he shall most certainly be saved to all eternity. Confidence implies a pretty strong hope, a good degree thereof ; altho' short of full assurance. In the above definition of faith, a good degree of assurance of salvation, *a confidence that Christ loved me*, is made the very essence of the faith of the gospel. It supposes that a person must be justified, and know, and believe his personal interest in Christ, before he believes the gospel. According to this opinion, a person must first have the testimony of the Holy Ghost, that his sins are forgiven ; and then afterwards he must believe the gospel, when he is already justified, and hath a good degree of assurance of hope. This is directly contradictory to the doctrine of the holy scriptures, as will hereafter be made evident. And the absurdity of the above opinion will appear, when it is considered ; that it makes the hope of the gospel to be the ground of the faith of the gospel : it makes faith to stand upon hope, contrary to the words of the Holy Ghost in my text ; where hope is made to stand upon faith. " Now faith is the substance or ground of things hoped for." Tho' faith, hope, and charity take place in the soul at the same time ; yet faith is first in order ; it is the foundation and support of hope. Therefore a man must believe the gospel, and so have the faith of the gospel, before he hath the hope of the gospel.

The Apostle Paul saith of believing Abraham, that " he was strong in faith." And he explains what
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he meant thereby, adding, “ being fully persuaded.” Rom. iv. 19, 20. Abraham’s strength of faith, or assurance of faith, was a full persuasion of mind, that God would perform his promise to him. When the Lord Jesus once asked his disciples what people said of him, and whom they thought he was ; Peter made a confession of his faith, saying, “ Thou art Christ the Son of “ the living God.” Matt. xvi. 16, &c. Whereupon his Lord pronounced him blessed, testifying that God had revealed that truth unto him. On another occasion, when the Lord Jesus had said much of himself, and of believing on him, calling it eating his flesh, and drinking his blood ; and many were offended at his discourse, not knowing who he was, nor understanding what he meant ; Peter declared both his faith and the assurance thereof, in these words, “ We believe and are “ sure, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.” John vi. 69. St. Luke speaking of the assurance of the faith or belief of the gospel, amongst the first followers of Christ, expresses it in these words, “ Those things which are most “ surely believed amongst us.” Luke i. 1.

Therefore faith is the belief of the gospel ; and the full assurance of faith is a strong belief, (or a full and firm persuasion of mind wrought by the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost) that the gospel is the truth of God ; that Jesus is the Son of God, God and man in one person, the Christ, the Saviour of sinners ; and that his divine righteousness, or his active and passive obedience, is the whole and sole cause of salvation. St. Peter sets forth the faith of the gospel, the one faith, in these words ; “ precious faith in the
“ righteousness

“righteousness of Jesus Christ our God and our Saviour.” 2 Pet. i. 1. Thus much as to what the faith of the gospel is, and also what assurance of faith means.



SECTION VIII.

The necessity of faith and repentance.

I SHALL now proceed to set forth the necessity of faith, or of believing the gospel. To believe the gospel is the commandment of the everlasting God, on which eternal life hangeth. The Father's commandment is, “Hear ye him.” And St. John saith, “This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John iii. 23. St. Paul saith, “The gospel, the preaching of Jesus Christ, the revelation of the mystery, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith,” (or of believing it, and walking conformably thereto.) Rom. xvi. 25, 26. The Lord Jesus saith, “I know that his commandment is life everlasting.” Johu xii. 50. Therefore he commanded his Apostles, saying, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.” Mark xvi. 15, 16. The gospel is the truth, the faithful word of God, who cannot lye. God's commandment to believe the gospel requires persons to believe nothing but what is the

the truth. The gospel reports or makes known, a truth of God to be obeyed. But how can a truth be obeyed any other way than by first believing it, and then afterwards by behaving agreeably thereto? The gospel sets forth God's way of saving sinners; and the only way, whereby a sinner can be saved. The gospel publishes good news to sinners. To believe the gospel is necessary to receive the joy, comfort and satisfaction of this good news. If a man hear good news, and doth not believe it; he receives no joy or pleasure thereby, he is no better for it: but if he believe it, he hath the joy of it.

Supposing a physician should prescribe to a sick man a medicine which being taken, would certainly cure him. If the sick man will not take the medicine, he can have no benefit from it. But he takes the medicine, and is cured by it. Now it is the medicine that works the cure; but the taking of it was necessary to have the benefit of it. So the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes it: but he that doth not believe it, is not saved.

The Lord Jesus saith of himself, that he "is the bread of life. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. And except a man eat his flesh and drink his blood, he hath no life in him. But whoso eateth his flesh and drinketh his blood hath eternal life, and dwelleth in him. For his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed." John vi. 27, &c. By his flesh and blood he meant his obedience unto death, his offering. By eating his flesh and drinking his blood, he meant believing on him; the Father being well pleased in him and in his work, his obedience

dience unto death. For when the jews asked him, what work they might do to please God : he answered, “ This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent ; ” that is, to work the work wherewith he is pleased. It appears from the jews reply, that they understood that he spoke to them of believing on him, on account of some work, which he was to work. For they said unto him, “ What sign shewest thou then, that we may see and believe thee ? What dost thou work ? ” But they did not know who he was ; nor understand what he said, nor what he was to work : they did not believe that he was the Lord Christ come down from heaven to give life to lost sinners. Yet he told them over and over again, that every one that believed on him, should have everlasting life.

To believe the gospel, or to believe on Jesus Christ, is as necessary to salvation, as eating and drinking is necessary to preserve the natural life. Yet it is not eating and drinking, but food, meat and drink, what we eat and drink, that feeds and nourisheth the body. But eating and drinking is the way, whereby we receive food. A person cannot have the benefit of meat and drink, unless he eats and drinks it. This illustrates the necessity of believing the gospel. As a man by eating and drinking receives the food into his stomach, whereby he lives naturally : so a man by believing the gospel receives Christ into his heart, whereby he lives spiritually : thus he feeds on Christ in his heart, or inner man, by faith, or by believing on him. “ He that eateth me, said Jesus, even he shall live by me.” John vi. 57. It is not believing the gospel that saves sinners ; but the Lord
Jesus

Jesus Christ, by what he hath done and suffered, saves them : there is no other Saviour. Now this truth is reported by the gospel to be believed. But no one can have the benefit of it, without believing it. If a man should be at the most plentiful table, and eat nothing ; what is he benefited thereby ? He only enjoys what he himself eats and drinks. Even so, he only receives benefit by the gospel, who believes it : he only lives by Christ, who believes on him. Yet none are justified or saved for believing : (or for acting faith, or for putting forth acts of faith of any kind, or for any efforts or endeavours to believe, or for the truth or sincerity of faith, as many writers have expressed themselves :) But all that ever have been saved ; and all that ever shall be saved ; have been saved, and will be saved through Jesus Christ and what he hath done and suffered. The active and passive obedience of Christ is the whole and alone cause of salvation. Sinners are pardoned on account of the atonement made by the blood of Christ. They are redeemed from the curse of the law, from the wrath, or vindictive justice of Almighty God, and from eternal damnation the punishment due to their sins, by the blood of Christ ; and they are constituted or made righteous, by his obedience ; whereby they are entitled to eternal life. And the whole righteousness of Christ, both his active and passive obedience, is given or imputed to them upon believing, or when they believe the gospel.

What hath been said of the necessity of faith will hold equally true for the necessity of repentance. A man must repent, and believe the gospel, otherwise he cannot be saved. So long as a

man thinks, believes, and hopes to be saved by his own righteousness ; so long as he is working for life, endeavouring to establish his own righteousness and to live thereby ; he can receive no benefit from Christ. He must repent, change his mind, cease to do evil ; and also cease from working to find acceptance with God ; he must turn from his self-righteousness, and believe in Christ, before he is justified : “ For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Gal. ii. 16. And “ As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse.” Gal. iii. 10. Thus much as to the necessity of faith and repentance.



SECTION IX.

How men obtain faith.

I SHALL now endeavour to set forth, how men obtain the faith of the gospel : And indeed God, who of his sovereign grace gave Christ to redeem sinners, of the same grace gives to each of them, whom he saves, to believe on him. “ Unto you is it given in the behalf of Christ to believe on him.” Phil. i. 29. “ For by grace are ye saved, thro’ faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast.” Eph. ii. 8, 9. The same almighty power of God that was put forth in raising Christ from the dead, is exerted in the quickening or regenerating of men dead in trespasses and sins ; and in teaching them to know, and understand, and believe, and obey the gospel. (See

(See Eph. i. 19, 20. and Chap. ii.) Man was originally made to live by his own righteousness; and by nature he knows no other way. He hath some knowledge of God, as a just God: so that he thinks, if I am good, God will love me; but if I am wicked, he will hate and destroy me. But the knowledge of God as a Saviour comes by revelation. Had there been no sin, there would have been no occasion for mercy. Sin, which is the cause and origin of all evil, gave occasion to manifest the mercy of God. There is no enquiry of equal importance to man, as to know, how to obtain God's favour and be saved. Yet the light of nature cannot furnish the answer. Man by nature cannot but think of doing something, or suffering something; or that some change or alteration must be made in him, to render him different from others, in order to obtain mercy. But if a man have got a good conceit of himself, (and who hates himself? for nothing is nearer and dearer to any of us naturally than one's own dear self :) and can believe, that he is good and righteous; then he hopes that God will save him. But to think and heartily believe, that the righteous and holy God can and will justify and save wicked, ungodly and hell-deserving sinners, as such, without their doing something first, or being some way fitted, qualified, changed or prepared to entitle them to it, is above the power of nature. It goes against the common sense and natural understanding of man. Hence it comes, that all persons are for being saved by doing something; and all without exception are inclined to establish their own righteousness, or to be saved by their own works, on goodness, or something of their own, either

doing or suffering. But the gospel publisheth and makes known a free, full, and compleat salvation to sinners, as such, upon believing it, without requiring any fitness, meetness, preparation, or qualification to deserve it. "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that thro' this man (*Jesus Christ*) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things." Acts xiii. 38, 39. And "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Rom. iv. 5. "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." Isa. lv. 1. "For Jesus Christ receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Luke xv. 2. Now to believe this, so as to be comforted and live thereby, is above the power of nature, till it be revealed.

When Simon Peter made a confession of his faith, the Lord Jesus told him, that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but God Almighty. And he told the jews in his discourse, John vi; when he talked to them of believing on him, calling it, eating his flesh and drinking his blood; that no man could come to him, or believe on him, unless it was given to him of God. "No man can come unto me, except the Father draw him." And he explains what he meant by the Father's drawing, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." John vi. 44, 45. Isaiah saith, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." Is. xlv. 13. And Jeremiah saith, "And they shall

“ shall teach no more every man his neighbour,
 “ and every man his brother, saying, Know the
 “ Lord (*Jehovah* :) for they shall all know me,
 “ from the least of them unto the greatest of
 “ them, saith the Lord (*Jehovah*.)” Jer. xxxi.

34. One man may teach another any natural thing, which he himself understands, and the other hath a capacity to learn. One man may teach another latin, greek, or hebrew, arts and sciences, trade or business: One man may teach another to make a profession of faith; as children are taught to say a catechism. But no man in all the world can teach another to know the Lord, the just God and the Saviour. For “ No man can
 “ say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy
 “ Ghost.” 1 Cor. xii. 3. The faith of the gospel doth not stand on the teaching or wisdom of man, but in the power of the Holy Ghost. “ For
 “ our gospel came not unto you in word only,
 “ but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and
 “ in much assurance.” 1 Thess. i. 5. The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of faith, he teaches, he persuades sinners to believe the gospel. And how he effects this work of God attended with such glorious blessings, privileges and promises; and productive of holiness and every good work; the apostle Paul sets forth in these words, “ God
 “ who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the
 “ light of the knowledge of the glory of God,
 “ in the face (or *person*) of Jesus Christ.” 2 Cor. iv. 6. The Holy Ghost reveals Jesus Christ, he maketh known his name, the just God and the Saviour, the Lord (*Jehovah*) our righteousness. He gives to sinners to understand the gospel,
 and

and on believing it to experience in their hearts the divine complacency, the good pleasure of God in Jesus Christ and in his consummate righteousness. The sinners now believing on Jesus Christ, and confiding in his precious blood and perfect obedience, as sufficient for salvation, have the peace of God in their consciences, divine joy in their hearts, and find rest unto their souls. They now believe the gospel and receive it, "Not as the word of men; but (as it is in truth) the word of God; which effectually worketh in them that believe." 1. Thess. ii. 13. The Holy Ghost demonstrates the truth of the gospel, not in such a way as a philosopher proves a proposition by a chain of arguments, but by light and power he makes manifest the truth thereof: so that a condemned sinner can conceive and believe (what is above the power of nature to do) that the righteous and holy God can justify the ungodly consistently with his own divine attributes. To illustrate this teaching or demonstration of the Holy Ghost by what a natural man may comprehend. Suppose that a man should be born blind and continue so for forty years; suppose that he had extraordinary natural parts, and the very best education he was capable of, and that he heard much discourse about light and its beauties and properties, and the difference of colours; he might indeed, and he would, form to himself some sort of conceptions about those things: but having no just ideas thereof, his conceptions would be as wide from the truth, as that man's were, who thought that scarlet colour was like the sound of a trumpet. But if it should please God to give sight to such a blind man, then at once to his great surprise

surprize he would know and understand the beauties of light and the difference of colours, tho' he might not know by what names to distinguish and call them. Then also he would soon see and perceive, what strange and false conceptions he formerly had had about those things. What a man sees with his own eyes, he believes. His seeing is his evidence, and proof sufficient to himself. And thus the teaching and demonstration, the light and power of the Holy Ghost is to a true believer the evidence of things not seen. For the Holy Ghost opens the eyes of the understanding to see the truth, and by his almighty power he fully satisfies the mind and conscience, demonstrating it to be the truth, the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The written word of God, the holy scripture, is also another evidence to him; and his ear is now opened to hear it, and his understanding is enlightened to comprehend it. He knows now and believes that Jesus is the Christ, the beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased, a sufficient Saviour for a lost and condemned sinner. He knows now that Jesus Christ is the image, the glory of the invisible Jehovah, God manifested in the flesh, the true God and eternal life. This excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ, this knowledge of the only true God, which is eternal life, comes by divine revelation, by the teaching and demonstration of the Holy Ghost; who maketh sinners, whom he quickens or regenerates, altho' dead in trespasses and sins, to hear the voice of God, and to know and understand and believe the faithful word of the gospel of God. The Lord Jesus told his apostles, that the Holy Ghost should testify of him; and that

that they also should bear witness. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." John xv. 26, 27. The apostles said, "We are his witnesses, and so is also the Holy Ghost." Acts v. 32. The Holy Ghost will testify of Christ to the end of the world; so also will the apostles by their writings. The faith of the gospel stands upon the testimony of the Holy Ghost, to the mind and conscience; and upon the testimony of the apostles in their writings, the written word of the holy scriptures, which is also the testimony of the Holy Ghost: for the apostles preached and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The gospel or what God testifies, is the matter of faith or the thing to be believed: God's testimony or his word in the scriptures, and the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost, are the ground and the evidence upon which God's elect believe the gospel. And thus, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, *read or preached.*" Rom. x. 17. And those who have the faith of the gospel, have not obtained it by their own labour, pains, efforts or endeavours, or by any acts exerted by their own minds; but it hath been freely given to them from above by him, who of his own will begets his people with the word of truth. James i. 17, 18. So that it is as easy to believe the gospel, when Christ is revealed to any person; as it is to see, or hear, when a man hath eyes and ears. Without evidence a man cannot rationally believe any thing: but

but when he knows and understands a matter, and hath full evidence for it, he cannot but believe it. Must not a man believe what he sees with his own eyes, and hears with his own ears? And “ If we receive the witness (or testimony) of men, the witness (or testimony) of God is greater. For this is the witness (or testimony) of God, which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness (or testimony) in himself.” 1 John v. 9, 10.

It may be noticed that I have said nothing of a law-work, which some writers say is preparatory to the gospel. Neither have I spoken of conviction of sin; which some writers insist so much upon, as absolutely necessary to fit and prepare souls for coming to Christ; laying down so many steps, and giving so many marks thereof, whether it be of the right kind: in order, that persons may try and examine thereby, whether their conversion be genuine or not: I shall here deliver my opinion on these two points.

It is the duty of all men to keep the holy law of God. The obligation of the moral law is eternal. The gospel in no wise maketh void this law, but establishes it. It hath been a fatal mistake to some, who have thought that believers were under no obligation to the moral law. Hence they have been led to think, that God seeth no sin in his own people; or at least, that sin was less displeasing to God in his own people, than in others. This indeed is strange doctrine. Is not God essentially holy? Is He not at all times utterly averse to all sin? Is He not of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? Is it not the duty of every creature to obey him, who is sovereign Lord of All?

All ? If persons can bring themselves to think and believe, that there is no law, no duty ; and that God makes no account of sin, as if it was a mere trifle in his sight ; it will be no wonder, if they soon turn Ranters, and run into all manner of wickedness. This is rank Antinomianism, and Libertinism. It is poison to the soul. And when persons begin to think and say, that they need not, or do not like, to do a thing, because God hath commanded it ; unless they feel a willingness in themselves at that time to do it ; it betrays, that there is a root of this bitterness springing up in their hearts. It manifests, that they make their own will the motive of their obedience, instead of the revealed will of God. So they give way to self-indulgence, when they should practise self-denial ; and the end of it will be trouble and sorrow.

I conceive that every transgression of the holy law of God deserves damnation in believers, as well as in others : and that all believers are under obligation to Christ, to observe the moral law. I also conceive, that all conviction of sin (unbelief excepted) is by the law : “ For by the law is the “ knowledge of sin.” Rom. iii. 10. And St. Paul saith of himself, “ I had not known sin, but “ by the law.” Rom. vii. 7. I conceive also, that all whom God saves, are convinced, that they are sinners, when they are taught by the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. And he saith, “ They that are whole “ need not a physician : but they that are sick.” And, “ I came not to call the righteous, (for there are none such in their natural state, tho’ some may fancy themselves such ;) “ but sinners to re-
 pentance.”

"penitance." Luke v. 31, 32. And again he saith, "When he (the Holy Ghost) is come, he will reprove (or convince) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John xvi. 8.

It may be matter of fact, that many persons, whom God saves afterwards in the end, may go under the law for years, and work hard to establish their own righteousness, before they are converted and brought into the new covenant, as was the case of the apostle Paul. Yet they are not thereby qualified or made meet to receive grace, or intitled to it. Their own worth, or work, is not in any wise the cause of the grace afterwards given to them. For, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. ix. 16. Grace is sovereign and free, and only given in Jesus Christ. Positive, and peremptory, and awful indeed, is the declaration of almighty God to Moses; ("That no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Cor. i. 29.) "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." Ex. xxxiii. 19. See also Rom. ix. 15.

It is man's duty to keep the law, upon pain of eternal damnation. And if he could, and actually did, keep the law; he would live thereby. Man's sin deserves damnation; but his own works, which are his bounden duty to do, do not deserve the grace of God given in Jesus Christ. And if any sinful man hope to be saved by his own works, he is thereby carried further from Christ. The more self-righteous any one is; so much the more is his heart shut up against Christ. For self-righteousness

teousness is the root and strength of unbelief. A man that is working to establish his own righteousness (and it is natural for every man so to do) may be often convinced that he falls short of his duty; and he may be dejected and cast down upon that account: he may be pained and distressed: but by and by he hopes that he shall do better. Therefore he girds himself again; and again he is broken. (Isa. viii. 9. & ix. 10.) And so he may work on, and be convinced an hundred times over, that he falls short; and he may be distressed, yea much distressed for it. This is law-work; and such are legal convictions. But all this doth not intitle any one to mercy. And whatever distress, or plague, or misery, or exercise of soul any one may thus undergo; yet he doth not for all that deserve God's grace. I presume it will be granted, that one that hath been tormented a thousand years in hell-fire, hath suffered more pain, and plague, and misery, and distress, and anguish of soul, than any one on earth ever endured under convictions. But doth that fit, prepare, qualify, or entitle to mercy, or deserve God's grace? If it did, those in hell are surely best prepared and most deserving of God's grace. But who believeth so? Some writers and preachers speak of legal convictions in such a manner, as to teach people to lay stress upon them; and in part, not only to make a foundation of them; but also to live by them. This is legal doctrine, and derogatory to the sovereign grace of God, the grace freely given to worthless and hell-deserving sinners in Jesus Christ before the world began. 2 Tim. i. 9.

There are but two Testaments, the Law, and the Gospel; commonly called the Covenant of Works

Works and the Covenant of Grace : and, in scripture, “ The law of works, and the law of “ faith ;” “ The Law and Grace ;” “ The “ Law, and the Promise.” “ The first or Old “ Testament, and the New Testament.” (See Rom. iii. 27. Rom. vi. 15. Gal. iii. 18. Heb. ix. 15, 18.) All men by nature are under the law of works. This law requires perfect obedience, denounces curse and death upon every transgressor thereof, and shews no mercy. “ The “ man that doeth them, shall live in them.” Gal. iii. 12. “ The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Ezek. xviii. 4. “ And cursed is every one, that “ continueth not in all things which are written “ in the book of the law to do them.” Gal. iii. 9. This is the tenor of the law. Who can stand a trial by this holy, strict and dreadful law ? A law, which indeed promises life to the doer thereof ; but shews no mercy to the transgressor thereof. “ By this law must every mouth be stopped, and “ all the world become guilty before God.” Rom. iii. 19.

But the gospel, the glorious gospel of the blessed God, the new covenant in Christ's blood, the bond of peace betwixt God and sinners, publishes glad tidings of good ; it proclaims peace on earth and good will towards men ; grace, saving grace to lost sinners. It declares a free and full salvation to sinners of all sorts as such upon believing it. And tho' the gospel be delivered under the notion of a law, and is called the law of faith ; Rom. iii. 27. it being the commandment of the everlasting God to men to believe it : yet the gospel, the new covenant in Christ's blood, stands upon free, sovereign, absolute and unconditional promises ;

as appears from the following passages of holy scripture. “ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah : not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they brake, altho’ I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord :) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ; and will be their God, and they shall be my people : and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord : for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jer. xxxi. 31, &c. “ And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good ; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. “ Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgment,

“ judgments, and do them. Then shall ye re-
 “ member your own evil ways, and your doings
 “ that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves
 “ in your own sight, for your iniquities and for
 “ your abominations, Not for your sakes do I
 “ this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto
 “ you : be ashamed and confounded for your own
 “ ways, O house of Israel.” Ezek. xxxvi. 25,
 &c. By the clean water and cleansing is meant,
 as I conceive, what St. Paul calls the washing of
 Regeneration ; and by the new heart is meant
 the change made in all the faculties of the soul by
 the Holy Ghost enlightening the understanding
 with new light, influencing the will by new mo-
 tives, and engaging the affections with new ob-
 jects : and by the new spirit may be meant the
 new principle of obedience ; for the regenerate
 obey out love ; and the love of Christ constrains
 them. The shame and self-lothing is the effect of
 gospel-repentance unto life, when a sinner in God’s
 light sees how it is with him : his self-righteous-
 ness becomes an abomination to him. And ob-
 serve well ; God alone doth the whole work him-
 self, not for their sakes ; neither for their worth,
 nor works. See also Heb. viii. 8, &c. x. 16,
 17.

Now that I may with yet more precision set forth,
 how men obtain the faith of the gospel ; I shall
 endeavour to shew, how God brings them from
 under the law or covenant of works into the ever-
 lasting covenant, or into grace. All men are ei-
 ther under the law, or under grace. “ He that
 “ believeth not, is condemned already,” (John
 iii. 18.) as a transgressor of the law, being under
 it as a law or covenant of works, “ He that be-

"liveth the gospel, hath everlasting life, and
 "and shall not come into condemnation; but is
 "passed from death unto life," being under the
 new covenant. (John v. 24.) There is no me-
 dium between death and life. Every one is either
 a dead man in law, being under sentence of con-
 demnation by the law: or he is passed from death
 unto life, having obtained grace. To effectuate
 this momentous matter is the work of Omnipoten-
 tence; and what the law of works cannot do.
 The law cannot give life; "For if there had
 "been a law given, which could have given life,
 "verily righteousness should have been by the
 "law." Gal. iii. 21. The law is the ministration
 of condemnation and of death. The gospel
 is the ministration of the spirit and of righteous-
 ness, of peace and life. (See 2 Cor. iii. 6, &c.)
 This therefore is a work of God's sovereign and
 saving grace: "But grace and truth came by
 "Jesus Christ." John i. 17. When God saves
 a sinner, it is by the living agency of the Holy
 Ghost with the word of truth, the gospel of sal-
 vation. No man can apprehend Christ, till he is
 first apprehended by Christ. No man can come
 to Christ, till the Spirit of Christ comes to him,
 and draws him. No man can receive Christ, or
 believe on him, till it be given unto him. John
 vi. 44, 65. All therefore, who are brought into
 the new covenant in Christ's blood, are apprehend-
 ed by the holy Spirit, being dead in trespasses and
 sins, lying in their blood under the law. "You
 "hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses
 "and sins. (See Eph. ii. and read the first ten
 verses. Read also Ezekiel xvi. from 6th to 15th
 verse.)

How

How far or how much the holy Spirit may bless, or assist devout people working under the law, by awakening their consciences, enlightening their understandings, giving them to taste the good word of God, and the heavenly gift, and the powers of the world to come, is not my point at present. However, a man may be called and much affected by preaching, who is not called of God. Yea, a man may be enlightened, who will not be saved. "Many are called, but few are chosen." Matt. xxii. 14. Many are almost christians, that are not altogether such. Many partake of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in whom he doth not dwell and abide for ever. John xiv. 16, 17. Heb. vi. 4, 6. The union between Christ and his body the church is made and maintained by the Holy Ghost. "For by one Spirit are they all baptized into one body, whether they be jews or gentiles, bond or free; and are all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. xii. 13. Christ is in his people and they are in him by his Spirit. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. viii. 9. The Spirit, who dwells in Christ without measure, is communicated from Christ to every member of his body the church. Hereby they become living members of Jesus Christ, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones: Eph. v. 30. These are the generation of the Lord: these are Christ's seed, who will serve him: these will declare his righteousness. Psal. xxii. 30, 31. "These receive Christ and believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 12, 13. "And except a man be born again (or from above) he cannot see the king-

dom of God. Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Ye must be born again (or from above;) said the Lord Jesus most solemnly. John iii. 3, 5, 7.

God made man in his own image. By sin man lost the image of God. By regeneration man regains the image of God. To regenerate a man is absolutely and entirely the work of the Holy Ghost by the word of truth. This is the work of God, whereby a dead and condemned sinner is quickened, or made alive to God. "His eyes are opened; he is turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that he may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Jesus Christ." Acts xxvi. 18. "He is delivered from the power of darkness (*of sin and Satan*) and is translated into the kingdom (*the holy church*) of God's dear Son: in whom he hath redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; and is made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." Col. i. 12, 13, 14. This work, called regeneration, the new birth; God's calling, drawing, teaching, quickening, begetting, apprehending; the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, being born again or from above, born of water and the spirit, born of the Spirit, born of God, the new creation, comes not by the will of man, but by the will of God. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. ix. 16. It comes not with observation, but in a way and manner, and at a time unexpected, accord-

according to the purpose of the most High, "who
 "worketh all things after the counsel of his own
 "will. Eph. i. 11. It is written, "Awake
 "thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and
 "Christ shall give the light." Eph. v. 14. "A-
 "rise, shine *or be enlightened*, for thy light is
 "come, and the glory of the Lord is risen
 "upon thee." Isa. lx. 1.

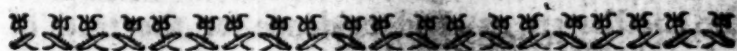
And this work is done at once, (as when God
 said, "Let there be light: and there was light.")
 and may be illustrated by our Lord's raising Laza-
 rus from the dead. Jesus cried with a loud voice,
 Lazarus, come forth. At his word, Lazarus al-
 tho' dead, and buried, and bound hand and foot
 and face, came forth. So souls are born of God.
 They may read or hear the word; and by his
 light and power the Holy Ghost opens their hearts,
 minds or understandings to know Jesus Christ
 and to understand the true meaning of the gospel.
 Hereby they are convinced of sin, of righteousness
 and of judgment: for they see that hitherto they
 have erred in unbelief being guilty condemned
 sinners before God: but they also see that in Je-
 sus Christ there is mercy and salvation for lost sin-
 ners. They repent and believe the gospel. Up-
 on believing they are justified; all their sins are
 forgiven, and they are made righteous by Christ's
 righteousness imputed to them. They are adopt-
 ed, have peace with God, and are begotten again
 to a lively hope of salvation. They are sanctified,
 being created in Christ Jesus unto good works:
 they have the fear of God put into their hearts;
 and they have the love of God shed abroad in
 their hearts by the Holy Ghost, who now dwells
 in them. They are thus renewed after the image

of God in knowledge, in righteousness, and in holiness. (See Colos. iii. 10, John xvii. 3. Eph. iv. 24.) They have now passed from death unto life : they have now a life hid with Christ in God, and they have fellowship with God.

It may be remarked in the memorable passage in Jeremiah xxxi, where God promises to teach his people to know the Lord ; it follows, “ for I will “ forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their “ sin no more,” which implies their justification : yet there is no mention of faith. In this place, the knowledge of Christ implies, that God will give them to believe on the name of the Son of God. A parallel passage of scripture occurs in Isaiah liii. 11. “ By his knowledge (*by giving* “ *the knowledge of himself*) shall my righteous “ servant (*Jesus Christ*) justify many : for he “ shall bear their iniquities.”

When Saul the persecutor of the christian church was converted, he little expected it, and he was in a very unlikely way for it ; for he was yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. But Jesus called to him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ? He was then apprehended, and heard the voice of Christ ; but he knew not who it was that spoke to him : Therefore he said, who art thou, Lord ? The Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. Saul trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? At once he was made willing, being converted : and from that time forward he followed Christ, and preached the faith which before he destroyed, Acts 9. The jailer was apprehended of God in the earthquake, but he did not know what was the matter with him

him. But presently he ran trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. By their preaching of the gospel unto him, Christ was made known to him; and he rejoiced believing in God. Acts xvi. When the Lord of glory was crucified, one of the two thieves, who at that time were justly put to death for their crimes, was called on the cross, brought to the knowledge of Christ, and saved as a brand snatcht out of the fire. The three thousand, who were converted on the day of Pentecost, were pricked in their heart under Peter's preaching, when they were convinced that the same Jesus whom they had crucified, was the Lord Christ; and they said, "What shall we do?" And they gladly received the word or believed the gospel, and were baptized, and the same day were added to the church. Acts ii. Thus I have endeavoured to set forth, and to illustrate, how men obtain the faith of the gospel. But it is not my intention hereby to lay down or maintain a process of conversion. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." 1 Cor. xii. 6.



SECTION X.

Of the evidence of the gospel.

I SHALL now speak of the evidence of the gospel, and shew, how faith is the evidence of

of things not seen ; and what those things not seen are. The prophecies of the old testament concerning Jesus Christ, which were all fulfilled in him : the miracles wrought by the Lord Jesus, and his servants the prophets and apostles : and especially, the resurrection of Jesus Christ ; and the miraculous descent and power of the Holy Ghost on the apostles at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost ; matters of fact well attested, and fully proved by a sufficient number of credible witnesses, are strong proofs for the truth of the gospel. Such evidence is sufficient to leave infidels without excuse. The scriptures of the old and new testament, like two tallies, answer exactly to one another. What the old testament foretold should come to pass, the new testament attests to have actually come to pass. Three of the apostles, Peter, James and John heard the voice from heaven, the testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ at his transfiguration. They and the other apostles, saw and conversed with the Lord Jesus after his resurrection ; and they saw him ascend up into heaven. Paul saw the Lord Jesus after his ascension, who revealed the gospel unto him : and he was caught up into paradise. The apostles were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of what they have left upon record. Therefore the writings of the apostles are as good evidence for the truth of what they have reported ; as the writings of any historians are an evidence of what they have related. But no one religion in all the world, hath been supported by such signs and wonders and miracles, as the law and the gospel. Neither have the characters of any historians been so supported ; as the characters of Moses, the prophets, e-

vangelists

vangelists, and apostles have been supported, by signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds; works done by them, above the power of either men, or devils: God himself manifestly interposing, and working by them. Not to mention that many of them sealed the truth of their testimony with their blood. Now Moses, the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, and all the scriptures both of the old and new testament, give witness, and bear record to Jesus Christ. They all harmonise, center, and terminate in the testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ and his work, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED: HEAR YE HIM." Matt. xvii. 5.

The holy scriptures are a standing, lasting, sure evidence for the truth of the gospel. Upon the strength and authority of this evidence, a man may rationally believe, that the gospel is a revelation from God; and that the doctrines contained in the holy scriptures are true, altho' he doth not rightly understand them. And if it be granted that the scriptures were written by the motion and inspiration of the Holy Ghost; then it must be granted that whatever was so written, is infallibly true. But the scriptures (excepting mistakes since made by transcribers) were written by the motion and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. (See 2 Peter i. 21.) And God gives to some men a demonstrative evidence hereof, which puts the matter beyond all doubt with them. See John vii. 17. Acts v. 32. 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. 1 Thess. i. 5. The Holy Ghost testifies by light and power, demonstrating or manifesting to the understanding and conscience, the truth of God, the testimony of God concerning Jesus Christ. They that have this

this evidence given to them, know assuredly that the gospel is the truth of God ; these are taught of God to believe : their faith stands not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. These have “ precious faith in the righteousness of our “ God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who of God is “ made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, “ and sanctification and redemption.” 1 Cor. i. 30. These are persuaded by the Holy Ghost to believe the gospel ; the persuasion of their mind, which is their faith, is the effect of the operation of the Spirit of God within them. This is the faith of the gospel, which is the substance or ground of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hence it appears, how faith is the evidence of things not seen. The Holy Ghost testifieth of Christ.” John xv. 26. “ He that believeth on “ the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.” 1 John v. 10. Upon the testimony of honest men we can readily believe what we have not seen. “ If ye receive the witness of men, the witness “ of God is greater.” 1 John v. 9. The testimony of God is greater than the testimony of man. It conveys superior light and more striking conviction ; stronger proof, and clearer evidence ; than any human testimony or evidence can do. Men may deceive one another ; but the word of God and the testimony of the Holy Ghost, are absolutely sure.

I shall here make a remark on the above words, “ He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the “ witness in himself.” 1 John v. 10. The greek word μαρτυρια, marturia translated witness, signifies testimony, evidence or proof : not the person

son of a witness, but his deposition; what he testifies. This text hath been frequently quoted to prove, that every believer of the gospel hath the Holy Spirit bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God; but this is a mistake. The word *witness* in this passage signifies the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ. This text proves, that every true believer of the gospel hath in himself the testimony of God conveyed into his mind and conscience by the Holy Ghost, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and so hath evidence within himself, why he believes on him.

The things not seen are all those things reported by the gospel, and recorded in the holy scriptures, as the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, the coming of the Holy Ghost; and all the words, and works of God: the whole counsel of God revealed and written in his word. And whoever believes the gospel upon its proper evidence, hath sufficient proof, and ought, to believe every word of God in the bible, so far as he knows and understands it.



SECTION XI.

The Blessings consequent upon believing the Gospel.

I Shall now endeavour to set forth the blessings consequent upon believing the gospel. He that obtains the precious gift of faith immediately becomes a blessed man. The Lord Jesus pronounced Simon Peter blessed when he believed on him, saying, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona."

H

Matt.

Matt. xvi. 17. Joy and peace, more or less, are immediately consequent upon believing the gospel. As a condemned malefactor going to the gallows with a rope about his neck, would be filled with joy at the agreeable surprise of an unexpected pardon coming to him from the King: so is a condemned sinner filled with joy and comfort, when Christ is made known unto him as the Saviour. And the deeper sense the person hath had of his own wretchedness, sinfulness, and unworthiness, the greater generally is his surprise and joy. "He that hath much forgiven, loveth much." Luke vii. 47. He experimentally feels, that God is well pleased in Christ his beloved Son; for the Lord Jesus communicates to him by his Spirit a taste, a share in that divine joy, and rest, and peace; which he himself now possesses without measure at the Father's right hand; "Where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore." Psalm xvi. 11. The believer is justified. "All that believe in Christ are justified from all things." Acts xiii. 39. He is not under condemnation. "He that believeth on him, is not condemned." John iii. 18. He is not under the curse of the law. "Christ hath redeemed believers from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them." Gal. iii. 13. He is not under the wrath, or vindictive justice of God. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Rom. v. 1. "God's anger is turned away from him." Hos. xv. 4. All his sins actual and original are forgiven, and forgotten: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more, saith the Lord." Jer. xxxi. 34. He is made righteous. "By the obedience

“bedience of one, shall many be made righteous.”

Rom. v. 19. “Blessed is the man to whom

“God imputeth righteousness without works.”

Rom. iv. 6. “Even the righteousness of God,

“which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and

“upon all them that believe.” Rom. iii. 22. He

is taken into covenant with God. “I swear un-

“to thee, and entered into a covenant with thee,

“saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.”

Ezek. xvi. 8. “I will make a new covenant

“with the house of Israel,” (*all believers.*) “I

“will make an everlasting covenant with them,

“that I will not turn away from them to do them

“good; but I will put my fear in their hearts,

“that they shall not depart from me.” Jer. xxxi.

31, &c. and xxxii. 40. He becomes a child of

God. “I will be their God, and they shall be

“my people.” “I will be a Father unto you,

“and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith

“the Lord almighty.” 2 Cor. vi. 18. “Ye

“are all the children of God by faith in Christ

“Jesus.” Gal. iii. 26. He is sanctified. “That

“they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inhe-

“ritance among them, which are sanctified by

“faith that is in Christ.” Acts. xxvi. 18. But

more of sanctification hereafter.

He is already regenerate. “Whosoever believ-

“eth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.”

1 John v. 1. The law of God, (even the moral

law) is written upon his heart. “I will put my

“law in their inward parts, and write it in their

“hearts.” Jer. xxxi. 33. “A new heart also

“will I give you, and a new spirit will I put

“within you; and I will put my Spirit within

“you, and cause you to walk in my statutes,

“ and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.”
 Ex. xxxvi. 26, 27. He is in Christ a new creature. “ If any man be in Christ, he is a new
 “ creature : old things are past away, behold, all
 “ things are become new.” 2 Cor. v. 17. He
 is made to glorify God by bringing forth good
 fruit. John xv. 8, 16. “ For we are his work-
 “ manship created in Christ Jesus unto good
 “ works, which God hath before ordained that
 “ we should walk in them.” Eph. ii. 10. He is
 made partaker of the divine nature. 2 Pet. i. 4.
 He hath the mind of Christ. 1 Cor. ii. 16. He
 is made conformable to the image of Christ. Rom.
 viii. 29. He is begotten again to a lively hope.
 1 Pet. i. 3. He is an heir of God. “ And if
 “ children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs
 “ with Christ.” Rom. viii. 17. Eternal life is
 his. “ He that believeth on the Son, hath ever-
 “ lasting life.” John iii. 36. “ I give unto
 “ them eternal life, and they shall never perish.”
 John x. 28. “ Israel shall be saved in the Lord
 “ with an everlasting salvation : ye shall not be
 “ ashamed nor confounded world without end.”
 Isa. xlv. 17. What need I add more ? all things
 are his ; for Christ is Lord and heir of all things,
 and he belongs to Christ. 1 Cor. iii. 21, &c.
 There is room to enlarge and say more, but I shall
 have occasion to resume the subject, when I come
 to treat of the things hoped for. So much there-
 fore shall suffice at present as to the blessings con-
 sequent upon believing the gospel.

SECTION

S E C T I O N XII.

The fruit and evidence of Faith, or the proof of believing the Gospel.

I Shall now endeavour to set forth the fruit, effect, or work of faith, which is the proof, that any one hath faith. The faith of the gospel is a working faith : And the work of faith is to keep the faith, and to obey all the commandments of the Lord. God makes all those to whom he gives to believe, willingly to obey, even to observe all things whatsoever the Lord Christ hath commanded. Obedience to Christ is the fruit, effect, or work of faith. Every man must shew his faith by his works. Whosoever believes in Christ, will observe and obey his commandments. And whosoever doth not keep his commandments, doth not believe in him. Justification and sanctification are inseparably connected together. “ But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Cor. vi. 11. “ Christ is made unto his people wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. 1 Cor. i. 30. I shall now explain myself about gospel-holiness or sanctification. Sanctification takes place in the soul upon believing the gospel. “ Sanctify them thro’ thy truth ; thy word is truth.” John xvii. 17. This truth means the testimony of God, the voice from heaven, the record, the gospel. “ God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, thro’ sanctification of the Spirit,

“ Spirit, and belief of the truth ; whereunto he
 “ called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of
 “ the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Theff.
 ii. 13, 14. “ Elect according to the fore-know-
 “ ledge of God the Father, through sanctifica-
 “ tion of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling
 “ of the blood of Jesus Christ : Grace unto you,
 “ and peace be multiplied.” 1 Pet. i. 2.

Holiness is either essential, or by communica-
 tion, or by separation. God alone is essentially
 holy : Holiness is of the essence of his nature.
 Had man been created essentially holy ; he could
 not have lost his holiness without losing his very
 being. Saints are made holy by communication,
 and by separation. The Lord Jesus communi-
 cates to believers his Spirit ; who sheds abroad in
 their hearts the love of God, and forms them
 after the image of Christ ; moulding their minds
 according to the mind of Christ ; changing them
 thro’ beholding the glory of the Lord Jesus into
 the same likeness, from glory to glory. The fruit
 or effect of this communication is love to God,
 and love to man, “ Joy, peace, long-suffering,
 “ gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temper-
 “ ance.” Gal. v. 22, 23. Hereby believers become
 heavenly minded, and devoted to God ; averse to
 sin, and willing to obey the Lord. This is what
 I have called holiness by communication, or thro’
 the communion of the Holy Ghost ; who makes
 and maintains the living union and communion
 betwixt Christ and his members. “ For they
 “ are all baptized by one Spirit into one body ;
 “ and have been all made to drink into one Spi-
 “ rit.” 1 Cor. xii. 13. And, “ if any man
 “ have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of
 “ his.”

"his." Rom. viii. 9. Holiness by separation is, when a person or thing is set apart for a holy use, or the service of God. So the priests, and the vessels in the temple, were sanctified or set apart for the service of God. So the Lord sanctified the seventh-day. Gen. ii. 3. So the saints are sanctified, or set apart to live to the praise and glory of God. In this sense they were sanctified by the blood of Jesus, whereby they were redeemed. But this sanctification only actually commences, when they are brought by the operation of the Holy Ghost to the knowledge of the Son of God, and believe the gospel. Then they are in fact delivered from the dominion or reigning power of sin and satan: "That they should not henceforth live unto themselves; but unto him who died for them and rose again." 2 Cor. v. 15. Man in his natural state lives to himself: he is not devoted to God: he follows his own will, and is led by his lusts. But by the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost, all who come to the knowledge of Christ the truth, and believe, are made a willing people. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psal. cx. 3. "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." Is. xlv. 21. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Pet. ii. 9. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14. Holiness or sanctification manifests itself by hating and forsaking sin;

sin; and by devotion of heart to God, or by endeavouring heartily and willingly out of love to obey God's holy will in all things. But this sanctification will further appear in all the fruits of faith, which I shall now treat of.

1. The faith of the gospel purifies the heart. "Purifying their hearts by faith." Acts xv. 9. The gentiles, as well as the jews, were purified in heart, both justified and sanctified, thro' the belief of the gospel. Believers get the answer of a good conscience towards God; they lose the guilt, burden and condemnation of sin, having hope, that they shall be saved: "The blood of Christ purging their conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. ix. 14. The connection with sin in them is broken. "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. vi. 14. "Whosoever abideth in Christ, sinneth not; whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him." 1 John iii. 6. God grants unto them, "that being delivered out of the hands of their enemies, they may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of their life." Luke ii. 74, 75. How shall they that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Knowing this, that the old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed; that henceforth they should not serve sin. For he that is dead, (*to sin*) is freed from sin, (*from the slavery and power of it.*) Rom. vi. 2, 6, 7. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John

John viii. 34, 36. "He that committeth sin is
 "of the devil." 1 John iii. 8. Yet St. John
 also saith, "If we say that we have no sin, we
 "deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."
 1 John i. 8. And St. James saith, "in many
 "things we all offend." James iii. 2. And So-
 lomon saith, "There is not a just man upon
 "earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccl.
 vii. 30. "For there is no man, which sinneth
 "not." 2 Chron. vi. 36. These texts of scrip-
 ture, which seem to oppose one another, are re-
 conciled thus. Believers have a law in their mem-
 bers, the corruption of fallen nature remaining in
 the flesh, which warreth against the law of their
 mind; they are tempted by the devil; they are
 daily liable to fall, sometimes they do fall into sin.
 Their strength to obey is not in themselves, but
 in Christ. If they abide in Christ, they are pre-
 served from sin, and kept by his power thro' faith.
 But if they abide not in him, (and it is very easy
 for them without continual watching and praying
 to get into unbelief,) then they wither, grow weak,
 lose they strength, become dry and barren; and
 may very easily be overcome by sin and satan: for
 without Christ they can do nothing. John xv. 4,
 &c. Yet they do not love sin; they dare not al-
 low themselves in it. When they sin, it causes to
 them shame and pain of heart, stinging remorse
 of conscience, bitter weeping. God will also as-
 suredly rebuke and chasten them for it. When
 David had sinned, he saith, "That God's arrow
 "stuck fast in him, that there was no soundness
 "in his flesh, because of God's anger; neither
 "any rest in his bones, because of his sin. He
 "was troubled, he was bowed down greatly; he
 "went

" went mourning all the day long : he was feeble
 " and sore broken : he roared by reason of the
 " disquietness of his heart : His heart panted,
 " his strength failed : he had no ease, nor peace :
 " he was ready to halt," *to give up all for lost.*
 See Psalm xxxviii. Peter also after cursing and
 swearing, and denying his Lord, went out ashamed,
 and wept bitterly. God hath no where prom-
 ised to keep believers from sin, unless they abide
 in Christ, and keep the faith. But he hath threa-
 tened to chastise or correct them, if they forsake
 his Law. Psalm lxxxix. 30, &c. Whoever then
 loves, or allows himself in sin, hath no scripture-
 ground to think himself to be a true believer.
 " Know ye not, saith St. Paul, that the unrighteous
 " shall not inherit the kingdom of God ?
 " Be not deceived : neither fornicators, nor ido-
 " lators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor a-
 " busers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves,
 " nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor
 " extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
 I Cor. vi. 9, 10. They must not expect it, if
 they go on in such sins. And again, " The
 " works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, un-
 " cleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft,
 " hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, se-
 " ditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunk-
 " enness, revellings, and such like : of the which
 " I tell you before, as I have also told you in
 " time past, that they which do such things, shall
 " not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. v. 19,
 20, 21.

II. Again, The Father's commandment HEAR
 YE HIM, imports first to believe in Christ, and
 then to obey him. Accordingly the Lord Jesus

com-

commanded the apostles to preach the gospel, and to teach all that should believe it, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded. And the Lord Jesus saith, " Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." John xviii. 37. To be of the truth, or of faith, means the same, as to be a believer of the gospel: therefore every one that hath the faith of the gospel, hears Christ's voice. " My sheep, saith Jesus, hear my voice, and they follow me." John x. 27. The voice of Christ means whatsoever he hath said; and to hear his voice means to give attention to it, to believe and to obey it. Now the Lord Christ hath made it an invariable and fixed statute of his kingdom to all his subjects to deny themselves, to bear his cross, and to follow him. " Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." Matt. xvi. 24, 25. See also Mark viii. 34, 35. Luke ix. 23, 24. and xiv. 25, &c. and Matt. x. 37, 38, 39.

Man was originally made to live by his own righteousness, and to have the favour of God together with the enjoyment of this world in its paradisaical state as the reward of his obedience. Therefore there is a natural bias in every man that is born, to live by his own righteousness, and to have the enjoyment of this present world: And fallen man, having lost the chief happiness, the favour of God, through disobedience, hopes to regain it by imperfect obedience; and would fain be happy in the good things of this present life. But sin hath brought the curse of God upon this world, which

which hath made the whole creation to groan and to travail in pain. And sinful man cannot make atonement for his sins, neither can he work out a righteousness to please God ; neither can he find rest to his soul in this present evil world, however eagerly he may pursue happiness in all that the world hath. " For all that is in the world, the " lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and " the pride of life, is not of the Father ; but is " of the world." 1 John ii. 16. Yet the natural man hath his life in these things ; but it is a carnal, earthly, sensual life without God. And whosoever will save his life, i. e. will have and enjoy this carnal, earthly, sensual life, shall lose a better life : and whosoever will lose his life, i. e. forsake and deny this carnal, earthly, sensual life for Christ's sake, shall find a better, a life hid with Christ in God. He shall have fellowship with God, the chief good : and the enjoyment of God makes a man happy. St. John saith, " Who is " he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John v. 5. The carnal man is overcome and led away by the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. He swims with the stream of corrupt nature. He lives after the flesh. So do some pretenders to religion. Perhaps they may have been enlightened, and professors of the faith, who once promised well, and could talk of impressions, and feelings, and experience, and for a while did run well ; but they grew weary of the cross, and of self-denial ; and so gave away to self-indulgence, and dwindled by degrees, and have now a life at ease ; but have all their happiness in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride

pride of life ; and are quite overcome by the world. Such plainly enough manifest, that they were not born of God. " For whatsoever is born of God, " overcometh the world : and this is the victory " that overcometh the world, even our faith."

1 John v. 4. Yet true believers have need to deny themselves daily of the natural bias to live by their own works, or something of their own, or to connect something with Christ. To keep the faith, or to live by Christ only, in opposition to the innate self-righteous principle, is one material part of the christian warfare. So long as they abide in Christ, keep the faith, or live by believing in the Son of God, they are kept by God's power thro' faith. But they are liable to get into self-righteousness and unbelief ; and then they may be insnared and drawn away by the flesh. But they are to deny all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ; that they may enjoy the happy life that is in God's favour. They are also to deny their own will, and to do, and to be resigned to, the will of God in all things. And this requireth self-denial ; as it also doth to take up the cross of Christ. " All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, " shall suffer persecution," saith St. Paul. 2 Tim. iii. 12. " Marvel not, my brethren, if " the world hate you," saith St. John. 1 John iii. 13. And the Lord Jesus saith to his people, " Because ye are not of the world, but I have " chosen you out of the world, therefore the " world hateth you." John xv. 19, 20. Those that are only born after the flesh, always did and will despise and persecute those, who are born after the spirit. (See Gal. iv. 29.) And it is God's will

to have it so for the trial of his people's faith. God declared immediately after the fall of Adam, that he would put enmity between the serpent's seed (the devil's followers,) and Christ's seed or people. Gen. iii. 15. When any one is called of God, he may expect the cross. "Let us go forth unto him," saith St. Paul, "without the camp, bearing his reproach: for Jesus suffered without the gate." Heb. xiii. 12, 13. And it is very trying to flesh and blood to be persecuted, and hated, and despised by relations, friends, and neighbours: yea, it looks very hard at first to a person, who would live godly and be saved, to see that almost every body despises him for it. Yea, even some who have made a hopeful beginning in religion, have fallen quite away, when the cross came. The stony-ground hearers received the word with joy, they made a fine flourish for a while; but when persecution came, they were offended. They loved the praise of man more than the praise of God. They were afraid of man; and, "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." Prov. xxix. 25. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, saith the Lord; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." See Matt. x. 28, &c. Christ will confess those hereafter, who confess him here; and he also will deny and be ashamed of those hereafter, who deny and are ashamed of him, his word and people here.

It also requires great self-denial to obey the following sayings of the Lord Jesus. "But I say unto you, (who are my disciples) that ye resist not evil:

" evil : but whosoever shall smite thee on thy
 " right cheek, turn to him the other also.
 " And if any man will sue thee at the law, and
 " take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.
 " And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile,
 " go with him twain. Give to him that asketh
 " thee, and from him that would borrow of thee,
 " turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath
 " been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and
 " hate thine enemy : but I say unto you, love
 " your enemies, bless them that curse you, do
 " good to them that hate you, and pray for them
 " that despitefully use you, and persecute you :
 " that ye may be the children of your father which
 " is in heaven, *(and so imitate his divine goodness)*
 " for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on
 " the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on
 " the unjust. Matt. v. 39, &c.

III. Again, all true believers are to follow the
 Lord Christ in his obedience to the holy will of
 God in all things commanded by him, and parti-
 cularly, in obedience to the moral law of the
 ten commandments. It hath been already set forth
 before and proved, that God regenerates all those
 whom he brings into the new covenant in Christ's
 blood ; and that he puts his law in their inward
 parts, and writes it in their hearts. Love is the
 fulfilling of the law, love to God and love to men.
 As soon as Christ is revealed, or God is made
 known as a Saviour, by the Holy Ghost to any
 one, he falls in love with Christ. His heart is
 filled with love to God ; for it is shed abroad
 therein by the Holy Ghost. " To you that be-
 " lieve Christ is precious." 1 Pet. ii. 7. " And
 " every one that loveth him that begat, loveth
 I 2 " him

“ him also that is begotten of him.” 1 John v. 1. So that there is love to Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh; love of complacency and delight in the people of God; and also love of benevolence or good will towards all mankind. And hereby the person is inclined, or made willing, to walk according to the moral law. “ Love worketh no ill to his neighbour.” Rom. xiii. 10. Therefore this is another fruit, effect or work of faith, willingly and conscientiously to perform all the religious, relative, and moral duties required by this holy law both to God and man. “ Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing but to love one another. Rom. xiii. 7, 8. “ Corrupt no man, defraud no man, wrong no man in body, goods or name.” This makes good husbands, good wives, good parents, good children, good masters, good servants, good neighbours, good subjects, good magistrates: it makes every man in his place and station ready to perform every duty required of him. And this proves and manifests that the law is written in his heart.

The moral law in the substance of it is unalterable. And tho’ believers are not under it as a covenant of works, a covenant of life and death, as it was given to the nation of Israel at Sinai; yet they are under this law to Christ their Redeemer. But it is unto them in him a law of liberty. They are free from the curse of this law, Christ having been made a curse for them. Gal. iii. 13. They are at all times free to live by Christ’s obedience to this law, and by his obedience to it they are constituted or made righteous. Rom. v.

19. " For Christ is the end (*the fulfiller*) of the
 " law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Rom. x. 4. Yet it is a rule of duty to them: not
 a law, whereby they are to live; but a law or
 rule, according to which they ought to walk.
 They are to follow their Lord herein, and to en-
 deavour to be conformable to him herein. And
 they have reason to be ashamed that they come so
 far short of him. Yea, and if they wilfully trans-
 gress against this law, or forsake it, " He will
 " visit their transgression with the rod, and their
 " iniquity with stripes." Psalm lxxxix. 30, &c.

The obligation of this holy law is eternal. It al-
 ways was good, now is good, and ever will be good.
 Was it not, and will it not be always right and
 good, to love God and one another? The gospel
 hath abolished the whole ceremonial law: but in-
 joins (as I conceive) what follows in these words:

" It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us,
 " (the apostles, and elders, with the whole church,)
 " to lay upon you no greater burden than these
 " necessary things: That ye abstain from meats
 " offered to idols, and from blood, and from
 " things strangled, and from fornication; from
 " which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.
 Acts xv. 28, 29.

But the gospel in no wise makes void the moral
 law in the substance thereof; but absolutely and
 altogether establishes it, except only that the se-
 venth day is changed to the first day of the week,
 which is now the christian sabbath.* Such as

I 3

think

* The apostle Paul observeth, that there is another
 day spoken of besides the seventh day; and that other
 day (as I conceive) is the first day of the week, called
 the

think and believe, that God's people are under no obligation to the moral law, (except as afore-
 excepted,) are misled and deluded, and most cer-
 tainly believe a lye. For the Lord Christ himself
 expounded the moral law in his sermon on the
 mount, and hath enjoined his disciples to observe
 it in its spirituality ; and hath said, " Whoso-
 " ever shall break one of these least command-
 " ments, and shall teach men so, he shall be cal-
 " led the least in the kingdom of heaven." Matt.
 v. 19. And St. John saith, " Hereby we do
 " know that we know him, if we keep his com-
 " mandments. He that saith, I know him (or
 " *I am a believer*) and keepeth not his command-
 " ments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."
 1 John ii. 3, 4. And again, " This is the love
 " of God (or *the proof that we love God*) that we
 " keep his commandments ; and his command-
 " ments are not grievous." 1 John v. 3.

Yet God's people come short of their duty
 daily :

the Lord's-Day. " Upon the first day of the week the
 " disciples came together to break bread." Acts xx. 7.
 The seventh day was first instituted as a sign and a me-
 morial, that on that day, God rested from the works of
 creation. It was again enjoined to the Jewish church as
 a memorial, that God had brought them out of Egypt,
 the House of bondage, and had given them rest in the
 good land of Canaan ; but that was only a typical rest.
 Therefore the apostle saith, " If Joshua had given them
 " rest (i. e. the true rest) than would he not afterwards
 " have spoken of another day. There remaineth there-
 " fore a rest (sabbatismos, a sabbatism or sabbath-keep-
 " ing) to the people of God." Heb. iv. 8, 9. The
 Lord's day is a memorial, that Christ hath finished his
 work, is risen again, and entered into eternal rest in
 heaven, to which in due time all true believers hope to
 come.

daily : therefore they cannot live by their own obedience. In many things they all offend : therefore they daily stand in need of the blood of Christ to cleanse their conscience. Christ is their resting place ; and his righteousness is the only solid ground of their hope of eternal life. By Christ they must live ; but not by their own obedience.

IV. Again, another fruit, effect or work of faith, is to observe all the ordinances of the Lord ; all the institutions of worship commanded in the new testament, and every one of his words or sayings ; as baptism, the Lord's supper, the Lord's day, hearing or reading the word, assembling together, prayer public and private, thanksgiving, singing of hymns and psalms, continuing stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and in the fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers. Acts ii. 42. The apostles were commanded by the Lord to teach believers to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them. Matt. xxviii. 20. And Jesus saith, " If any man love me, he will keep my words. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings." John xiv. 23, 24.

V. Again, another fruit or effect of faith is, that it works by love. Gal. v. 6. It not only disposes a person to do justly, but also to love mercy. " Believers are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that they should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10. " And let us not be weary in well-doing ; but as we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men ; especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Gal. vi. 9, 10. " For Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself

" himself a peculiar people, zealous of good
 " works." Tit. ii. 14. " This is a faithful
 " saying, and these things I will, saith St. Paul,
 " that thou affirm constantly, that they which
 " have believed in God might be careful to excel
 " in good works." Tit. iii. 8. Not to do some
 little, as a natural man will do, to maintain a
 good character; but to be eminent therein, to go
 before and to outdo others, every man according
 to his several ability, " In all things shewing him-
 " self a pattern of good works." Tit. ii. 7.
 The Lord Jesus told his Disciples, that they were
 the salt of the earth, and the light of the world;
 therefore saith he, " Let your light so shine be-
 " fore men, that they may see your good works,
 " and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 Matt. v. 16, &c. Now if there be a willing
 mind, it is accepted according to that " a man
 " hath, and not according to that he hath not."
 2 Cor. viii. 12. A rich man may give much,
 and yet fall short of his duty herein; and be far
 outdone by a poor man, that cannot give much.
 The poor widow exceeded all that cast into the
 treasury in our Lord's presence, according to his
 judgment, (and he is to be the Judge at last) tho'
 she gave but two mites. Many that were rich
 cast in much; but she gave all that she had, and
 therefore exceeded them all. (See Mark xii. 41.
 &c. Luke xxi. 1, &c.) St. Peter exhorts believers
 to have an honest conversation amongst unbelievers,
 that whereas they speak against them as evildoers,
 they may by their good works, which they shall
 behold, glorify God in the day of their visitation.
 And he saith, " It is God's will, that with well
 " doing they may put to silence the ignorance of
 " foolish

“ foolish men.” 1 Pet. ii. 12, 15. And St. James saith, “ Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” James i. 27. And again, “ Wilt thou know, O vain man ! that faith without works is dead ? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” James ii. 20, 26.

VI. Again, another fruit, effect or work of the faith of the gospel (which is a very good proof that a man hath it ; for it requires no little self-denial, but a good degree of heavenly-mindedness to practise it, at least for some persons) is to give a strict obedience to the following royal edict and standing statute of the kingdom of heaven. It shews the generous heart of the king of glory, “ Who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing, giving them their meat in due season.” Psalm cxlv. 15, 16. O that his people would imitate his goodness ; “ And let their affections on things above, not on things on the earth ;” (Col. iii. 2.) they would be the more ready and willing to leave this world to go to heaven. Lest the great ones of the earth should be offended at this, they are to remember that this concerns only the subjects of Christ’s kingdom, which is not of this world. But that believers may pay the more regard to this saying of their Lord, whose name is called the Word of God, and out of whose mouth goes a sharp two-edged sword (Rev. i. 16, & xix. 13.) it is delivered both negatively and positively thus, “ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through

" through and steal. But lay up for yourselves
 " treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor
 " rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not
 " break through, nor steal. For where your
 " treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 Matt. vi. 19, 20, 21. It may be remarked, that
 the Lord first forbids his disciples to lay up trea-
 sures upon earth. Then next he commands them
 to lay up treasures in heaven, i. e. by distributing
 to the necessity of the saints and the poor : which
 is lending unto the Lord. (And who hath given
 to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him a-
 gain ? Rom. xi. 35.) And afterwards, he gives
 them a reason for what he said, telling them, that
 if they laid up treasure on earth, it would draw
 their hearts to this world : but if they laid up trea-
 sure in heaven, it would draw their affections from
 this world and make them heavenly-minded : so
 that their hearts would be in heaven before they
 got thither. He also informs them, that it would
 be for their present happiness so to do. " If thine
 " eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of
 " light." If your hearts be entirely devoted to
 God, you will enjoy the light of his countenance.
 " But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall
 " be full of darkness." If your hearts be divid-
 ed betwixt God and the world : if ye love the
 world, ye will lose the love and favour of God ;
 " For if any man love the world, the love of the
 " Father is not in him." 1 John ii. 15. And
 then he tells them plainly, that, " No man can
 " serve two masters : for either he will hate the
 " one, and love the other : or else he will hold
 " to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot
 " serve God and mammon." Mammon signifies
 riches.

riches. Ye cannot love God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength, and get riches. A christian may give alms so as to have and maintain a good character amongst his neighbours, and be accounted a charitable man, and yet not keep this statute of Christ's kingdom. For it saith expressly, " Lay not up for yourselves treasures up-
 " on earth." Which St. Paul explains, " I
 " have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith
 " to be content." Phil. iv. 11. " Let your
 " conversation be without covetousness; and be
 " content with such things as ye have: for he
 " hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake
 " thee." Heb. xiii. 5. " Godliness with con-
 " tentment is great gain; for we brought nothing
 " into this world, and it is certain we can carry
 " nothing out. And having food and raiment,
 " let us be therewith content. But they that
 " will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare,
 " and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which
 " drown men in destruction and perdition. For
 " the love of money is the root of all evil: which
 " while some coveted after, they have erred from
 " the faith, and pierced themselves through with
 " many sorrows. But thou, O man of God,
 " flee these things; fight the good fight of faith,
 " lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. vi. 6, &c.
 Covetousness is called idolatry. Col. iii. 5. " Take
 " heed, saith the Lord, and beware of covetous-
 " ness." Luke xii. 15. " Let not covetousness,
 " saith St. Paul, be once named amongst you, as
 " becometh saints; for this ye know, that no
 " covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any
 " inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of
 " God." Eph. v. 3, 5. & 1 Cor. vi. 10. And
 he

he writes to the church at Corinth to exclude the covetous from their communion. 1 Cor. v. 11, &c. Covetousness is a sin, that easily overtakes religious people. There is a bias in our earthly nature to this world. And covetousness is covered with fine cloaks, vindicated by strong arguments, and called by specious names ; so that its poisonous quality is concealed. And if it be not carried to great excess, it gives no offence at all to the world ; but is rather commended. “ For the wicked blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.” Psalm x. 3. Now as religious people are generally sober, industrious, and honest ; and abstain from sports and polite entertainments, and fashionable pleasures, and many extravagancies, whereby they avoid expences ; in a common course of things, they get money, and must grow rich, if they disregard God’s word, by not giving alms in proportion to their profits, which are over and above what a reasonable provision for themselves and their families requires. And when they begin to hoard up, then they begin to be covetous, according to the proverb ; the love of money increases as the money increases. He that hath nothing, hath no treasure to set his heart upon : but he that hath something, hath a treasure ; and the Lord saith, “ Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” And if a man increase the treasure, he increases the temptation to covetousness. The Lord Jesus said unto his disciples, “ How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God ! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again, How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom

“dom of God!” (which implies that it is hard to have riches and not to trust in them. See Mark x. 23, &c.) But tho’ “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called : 1 Cor. i. 26. Yet some are chosen of God and called : “For with God all things are possible.” To be born to be rich, or to be an heir to an estate, or to become rich by God’s good providence, is very different from getting riches. The apostle Paul doth not say, that they that are rich, “But they that will be rich (*they that will get riches*) fall into temptation and a snare,” &c. And he saith, “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy : that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” 1 Tim. vi. 17, &c. But they that lay up riches, keep not Christ’s words. They grow covetous, and their hearts are drawn away from God. They become worldly-minded, make provision for the flesh, fall into self-indulgence, and lose their spiritual life and strength. Covetousness is a canker in the soul. “For the love of money is the root of all evil.” When religious people, who perhaps were once lively in their hearts, having had sweet sensations and refreshing joys, begin to lay up riches, they soon become dry and barren in their hearts, and insensibly sink into the spirit of the world, and become stupid and hard ; because they do not abide

in Christ and obey his words : so they err from the faith, and in the end pierce themselves thro' with many sorrows.

VII. But again, above and after all, obedience to the Lord's new commandment, (emphatically called *The law of Christ*. Gal. vi. 2.) is the special fruit and effect of the faith of the gospel, and the proof or touch-stone whereby every man's faith must be tried and manifested at the last day. The blessed Jesus in his last discourse to his disciples just before his death thrice enjoined this commandment to his people ; and it is mainly insisted upon by all the apostles, as the proof or evidence, that any one belongs unto Christ. " A new
" commandment, saith he, I give unto you,
" that ye love one another ; as I have loved you,
" that ye also love one another. By this shall
" all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye
" have love one to another." John xiii. 34, 35. Again, " This is my commandment, that ye
" love one another, as I have loved you. Greater
" love hath no man than this, that a man lay
" down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends,
" if ye do whatsoever I command you." And again, these things I command you, " that ye
" love one another." John xv. 12, &c. and 17. St. John, the favourite disciple, makes faith in Christ, and love to the brethren or people of Christ, the two chief commandments of the new testament. He calls the former, the Father's commandment ; and the latter the new commandment. " And this is his commandment (the Father's)
" that we should believe on the name of his Son
" Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he (Jesus
" Christ) gave us commandment." 1 John iii. 23.

See

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See also 2 John. He calls obedience to the former,
 " Walking in the truth ; and doing righteousness."
 2 John 4. and 1 John ii. 29. and iii. 7, 10. And
 he makes obedience to the latter the proof of obey-
 ing the former. " We know that we have passed
 " from death unto life, because we love the
 " brethren. He that loveth not his brother, a-
 " bideth in death." 1 John iii. 14. And he
 carries obedience to the new commandment so far,
 as that, " We ought to lay down our lives for
 " the brethren." Verse 16. " But whoso hath
 " this world's good, and seeth his brother have
 " need, and shutteth up his bowels of compas-
 " sion from him, how dwelleth the love of God
 " in him ?" (This love must be manifested not
 only in words, but in works.) " Let us not love
 " in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in
 " truth." Verses 17, 18. St. James saith,
 " What doth it profit, my brethren, though a
 " man say he hath faith, and have not works ?
 " can faith (*such a dead faith*) save him ? If a
 " brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily
 " food, and one of you say unto them, depart
 " in peace, be you warmed and filled : notwith-
 " standing ye give them not those things which
 " are needful to the body ; what doth it profit ?
 " even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead,
 " being alone. Yea a man may say, Thou hast
 " faith, and I have works : shew me thy faith *
 " without thy works, and I will shew thee my
 " faith by my works." James ii. 14, &c. St.
 Peter saith, " Seeing ye have purified your souls,

K 2

" in

* *Without* should have been *by*, as in several greek
 copies : for no man can shew or prove that he hath faith
 but by his works.

“ in obeying the truth (*believing the gospel*) thro’
 “ the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren;
 “ see that ye love one another with a pure heart
 “ fervently.” 1 Pet. i. 22. And again, “ Love
 “ the brotherhood.” 1 Pet. ii. 17. And above
 “ all things have fervent charity among your-
 “ selves: for charity shall cover the multitude of
 “ sins. Use hospitality one to another without
 “ grudging. As every man hath received the
 “ gift, even so minister the same one to another,
 “ as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”
 1 Pet. iv. 8, 9, 10. St. Paul calls this work of
 faith, this obedience to the new commandment,
 “ the labour of love;” and he makes it a proof
 of election, and the criterion to distinguish the
 elect from all others. “ Remembering your
 “ work of faith, and labour of love, and pati-
 “ ence of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ: know-
 “ ing, brethren beloved, your election of God.”
 1 Theff. i. 3, 4. And, “ It is impossible for
 “ those who were once enlightened, and have
 “ tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made
 “ partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted
 “ the good word of God, and the powers of the
 “ world to come;” (so far the Apostle describes
 what is common to those who believe for a while,
 being enlightened and having received the word
 with joy, but do not bring forth the proper fruit
 of faith; and to those who believe to the saving
 of the soul, being born of God, and bring forth
 fruit.) “ If they shall fall away to renew them
 “ again to repentance; seeing they crucify to
 “ themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him
 “ to an open shame. For the earth which drink-
 “ eth in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and
 “ bring-

“ bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom
 “ it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God.” (So
 when a man that is enlightened, continues in
 Christ’s words, and brings forth the fruits of
 righteousness, he receives fresh blessings of grace.)

“ But that which beareth thorns and briers, is
 “ rejected, and is nigh unto cursing ; whose end
 “ is to be burned.” (So will all enlightened per-
 sons be, who do not deny themselves, bear Christ’s
 cross, and follow him, and do the works of love.)

“ But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of
 “ you, and things that accompany salvation :

(Here comes the criterion) “ For God is not un-
 “ righteous to forget your work and labour of

“ love, which ye have shewed towards his name,

“ in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do

“ minister.” Heb. vi. 4, &c. And St. Paul

exhorts the churches “ to provoke one another

“ unto love, and to good works.” Heb. x. 24.

“ Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful

“ to entertain strangers. Remember them that

“ are in bonds, and them which suffer adversity.

“ To do good and to communicate forget not :

“ for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

Heb. xiii. 1, 2, 3, 16. “ Be kindly affectioned

“ one to another with brotherly love : in honour

“ preferring one another : distributing to the ne-
 “ cessity of saints : given to hospitality.” Rom.

xii. 10, 13. “ By love serve one another.” Gal.

v. 13. “ Be kind one to another, tender-hearted,

“ forgiving one another.” Eph. iv 32. “ Look

“ not every man on his own things, but every man

“ also on the things of others.” Phil. ii. 4.

“ Put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humble-

“ ness of mind, meekness, long-suffering ; for-

" bearing one another, and forgiving one ano-
 " ther : and above all put on charity, which is
 " bond of perfectness." Col. iii. 12, 13, 14.
 Every token, expression, and act of love in obe-
 dience to the new commandment, is acceptable to
 the Lord. But these good works spring from faith
 in the Lord Jesus, and are done, out of love to
 Christ, to his people, for the truth's sake that
 dwells in them, and because they belong to Christ.
 And this is imitating the love of Christ, who lived
 and died to save the church, which he purchased
 with his own blood. These are the good works,
 which will be remembered and recompensed at the
 resurrection of the just. By the works of true
 charity shall all men know, who are the disciples
 of Christ : but this will not be in this present
 world, but at the great day. " When the Son
 " of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy
 " angels with him, then shall he sit upon the
 " throne of his glory. And before him shall be
 " gathered all nations ; and he shall separate them
 " one from another, as a shepherd divideth his
 " sheep from the goats : and he shall set the sheep
 " on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
 " Then shall the King say unto them on his right
 " hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit
 " the kingdom prepared for you from the foun-
 " dation of the world. For I was an hungred,
 " and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye
 " gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took
 " me in : naked, and ye cloathed me : I was sick,
 " and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye
 " came unto me." And tho' the righteous will
 answer saying, " When did we so to thee ?
 Yet the King will say unto them, " Verily I say
 " unto

“ unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto
 “ one of the least of these my brethren (*who are*
 “ *set on his right hand*) ye have done it unto me.”
 Matt. xxv. 31, &c. For Jesus said to his dis-
 ciples, “ He that receiveth you, receiveth me ;
 “ and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that
 “ sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the
 “ name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet’s
 “ reward ; and he that receiveth a righteous man
 “ in the name of a righteous man, shall receive
 “ a righteous man’s reward. And whosoever
 “ shall give to drink unto one of these little ones,
 “ a cup of cold water only in the name of a dis-
 “ ciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise
 “ lose his reward.” Matt. x. 40, &c. A right-
 eous man means a true believer, who is made
 righteous by the righteousness of Christ : and a
 disciple is a follower and learner of Christ.

For want of the above good works will all nomi-
 nal christians, all formal professors of christianity,
 and all enlightened persons, (who stumbled at the
 cross, or rested in impressions, feelings and joys,
 instead of Jesus Christ and his righteousness ; and
 who made their own experience the proof of their
 being believers, instead of the labour of love, the
 patience of hope, and the other works of faith ;
 however highly they thought of themselves here,
 and how much soever they might talk of faith,
 grace, Christ, the gospel, or experience) be con-
 victed and declared to be hypocrites, and disown-
 ed by the Lord Jesus : who will say unto them,
 “ Depart from me. For I was an hungred, and
 “ ye gave me no meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave
 “ me no drink : I was a stranger, and ye took
 “ me not in : naked, and ye clothed me not :
 “ sick,

“ sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.
 “ Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord,
 “ when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or
 “ a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and
 “ did not minister unto thee ?” But the Lord will
 reply, “ In as much as ye did it not to one of the
 “ least of these (*on the right hand*) ye did it not to
 “ me.” Matt. xxv. 41, &c.

True believers are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that they should walk in them. Eph. ii. 10. And altho’ some of God’s people bring forth more fruit, than others of them do ; yet they all bring forth fruit ; some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, and some an hundred-fold. And the more good works they do out of love to Christ, and in obedience to the new commandment, the greater proof do they give, that they belong to Christ. “ Here-
 “ in, said the Lord Jesus, is my Father glorified,
 “ that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my
 “ disciples.” John xv. 8.

How doth any man manifest, that he hath the mind of Christ, who doth not study conformity to Christ in heart and life ? How doth any man manifest, that he is a follower of Christ, who doth not endeavour to tread in Christ’s steps, and to walk after his example ? How doth any man manifest, that he is a disciple of Christ, who doth not learn of him, and hear his voice in all things whatsoever he hath commanded ? And how doth any one prove, that he loves Christ, (and whoever doth not love him is under the anathema. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.) who doth not keep his commandments, and do them ? “ If ye love
 “ me, saith the Lord, keep my commandments,
 “ He

" He that hath my commandments and keepeth
 " them, he it is that loveth me. He that loveth
 " me not, keepeth not my sayings." John xiv.
 15, 21, 24. Whatever profession any one may
 make of christianity, or of being in the faith of
 Christ, no man manifests or proves that he is a
 real christian, or hath the faith of the gospel, any
 further than his life and conversation is agreeable
 to the gospel of God. St. Paul saith, " Only
 " let your conversation be as it becometh the
 " gospel of Christ." Phil. i. 27 It costs a per-
 son no labour or pains to obtain the faith; it is
 the gift of God: Yet saving faith is a working
 faith. " The word of God effectually worketh
 " in them that believe." 1 Thess. ii. 13. The
 labour of love, the patience of hope, and a wil-
 ling, hearty, and chearful, tho' imperfect obedi-
 ence to all the commandments of God, and spe-
 cial sayings of the Lord Christ, are the genuine
 fruit, effect and work of faith unfeigned; and
 these are the only sure proof and evidence, that
 any man knows the grace of God in truth, (Col.
 i. 6.) or hath the faith of the gospel. " For
 " the grace of God that bringeth salvation (or
 " the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God
 " unto salvation to every one that believeth. Rom.
 " i. 16.) teacheth us to deny ungodliness and
 " worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously,
 " and godly in this present world; looking for
 " that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of
 " the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:
 " who gave himself for us, that he might redeem
 " us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a
 " peculiar people, zealous of good works. These
 " things, saith St. Paul, speak and exhort, and
 " rebuke

“ rebuke with all authority.” Tit. ii. 11, &c.
 “ Follow peace with all men, and holiness, with-
 “ out which no man shall see the Lord ; looking
 “ diligently lest any man fail of the grace of
 God.” Heb. xii. 14, 15. “ Whatsoever things
 “ are true ; whatsoever things are honest ; what-
 “ soever things are just ; whatsoever things are
 “ pure ; whatsoever things are lovely ; what-
 “ soever things are of good report ; if there be
 “ any virtue, and if there be any praise, think
 “ on these things,” (*and do them.*) Philip. iv.
 8, 9. “ Every tree is known by his own fruit.”
 Luke vi. 44. “ Every good tree bringeth forth
 “ good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil
 “ fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit ;
 “ neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.
 “ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit,
 “ is hewn down and cast into the fire. Where-
 “ fore by their fruits ye shall know them.” Matt.
 vii. 17, &c.

It is granted, that hypocrites may do many of
 the above works, but not out of charity ; “ With-
 “ out which, though a man bestow all his goods
 “ to feed the poor, and give his body to be burn-
 “ ed, it profiteth nothing.” 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Yet
 no man hath scriptural-ground to conclude, that
 he is a true believer, who doth not perform them
 out of love to Christ in some good measure ac-
 cording to his ability.

SECTION

S E C T I O N XIII.

Remarks upon different sorts of believers.

IT may be remarked, that many people either believe, or at least profess to believe the gospel, upon the testimony of man. And as some are jews, because they were born of jewish parents, and were educated and brought up in the profession of judaism: and as others are mahometans, because they were born of mahometan parents, and educated and brought up in mahometism: and as others are heathens, because they were born of heathen parents, and educated and brought up in heathenism: so, many are christians by profession, because they were born of parents professing christianity, and by them taught to believe the gospel. This faith stands in the wisdom and teaching of man. It produces a formal profession of christianity without a christian life and conversation. Thus, many receive christianity by tradition from their parents; and tho' some are civil and sober and moral, and observe outward decorum, and conform to modes and forms of worship; yet they walk according to the course of this world, and are in the spirit and temper thereof, minding earthly things, and are overcome by the world. Others are openly profane, living in gross sins; whereby they manifest, that they are of the world, and that their faith is dead.

Again, it hath been set forth above, that there is an evidence for the truth of revelation, upon the authority whereof, a man may rationally believe,

lieve, that the holy scriptures are a revelation from God. The faith which stands upon this evidence, hath a better foundation, than that which stands barely upon human tradition, And tho' no man can understand the deep things of God revealed in the scriptures without the illumination or teaching of the Holy Ghost : yet a man, who believes the scriptures to be a divine revelation upon the external evidence, which God hath given to support their authority, may believe, that that which is revealed in the scriptures, may be true ; altho' above his present comprehension. Such a faith, or persuasion of mind, will have an effect upon a man, and make him pay a deference to the word of God ; may put him upon searching the scriptures and praying for illumination, and have some influence upon his whole conduct in life. And those who have heard the gospel, and have had this evidence laid before them to believe it ; and yet nevertheless oppose the gospel, will have something more to answer for to God, than those who have not. See Matt. x. 15. and xi. 20, &c.

Again, there is a believing of the gospel upon illumination, which is attended with joy. Such believers were the stony-ground, and the thorny-ground hearers of the word ; and such were the five foolish virgins. This faith makes religious people, fair and flourishing professors, who promise well at first, and appear for a while very hopeful. These frequent the ordinances of God, practise many duties, escape the pollutions of the world, the gross wickedness and immorality thereof, through a superficial partial knowledge of the character of Christ. These may have great gifts, feelings, impressions and mani-

manifestations, and for a while be warm and lively, and edify others. But in time they manifest that they have not root. They may continue in the use of the ordinances, talk of religion and of their own past experience, and give the Lord Jesus many fine compliments in words ; but they do not like his cross, nor his hard sayings ; they grow weary of self-denial, and want a heart to do all the good works required by the gospel : “ because they received not the love of the truth, “ that they might be saved.” 2 Theff. ii. 10. They do not continue in Christ’s words ; they do not abide in him ; so they lose their strength, grow languid, insensibly fall into the spirit of the world, give way to self-indulgence, and in the end are overcome by the love of the world. These people, while their joys and feelings last, are generally very high, full of a good conceit of themselves, and apt to despise and undervalue others. Perhaps they think themselves very near perfection, if not quite perfect ; because they never knew their own deceitful hearts, were never baptized with fire, nor salted with salt. The Lord had neither killed them, nor made them alive ; he had neither wounded, nor healed them. Deut. xxxii. 39. Their strong holds of self-righteousness were never pulled down ; their proud and vain imaginations or corrupt reasonings were never cast down, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God : their every thought was never brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. They never knew the true character of God. They did not know him to be a just God as well as a Saviour. They looked upon him to be all love and mercy ; and thought

that he made light of sin, as if it were little or no offence to him ; so that he would let it go unpunished. They knew not that God hates sin, and is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity : for the fear of God was never put into their hearts. The holy law of God was never written in their hearts. They were never broken in heart, nor poor in spirit or rightly humbled. They were never yet made a willing people ; because they were never yet washed in regeneration, nor renewed by the Holy Ghost. The Lord Jesus was never revealed in them as the true God and eternal life. They never had the full assurance of understanding of the mystery of God, of the Father and of Christ. They did not understand, that God was in Christ ; and that the Father and the Son are one God ; so they thought, that worshipping Christ was not worshipping God. They never understood the gospel : they always had two foundations, connecting something with Christ, in point of acceptance. They never had the one faith. Though they seemed to be in Christ, they did not abide in him ; and so could not bring forth fruit. They did not keep the faith, and live by believing in the Son of God ; but they lived by their exercise of soul, or by their doings, or feelings, or something else ; not by Christ and his righteousness alone, nor by the testimony of God. They made their own experience the proof, that they were in the faith, instead of the works of faith abovementioned. They judged and tried themselves by their own feelings, and impressions, and fancies, instead of coming to the touch-stone, the law and the testimony, the sure oracles of God. No wonder if such fall
away,

away, or turn fanatics ! Their faith and hope is not in God. They are led away by their enthusiastic fancies, impressions and feelings ; and tremble not at God's word. Of these St. John speaks, " They went out from us, because they
 " were not of us : for if they had been of us,
 " they would no doubt have continued with us :
 " but they went out, that they might be made
 " manifest, that they were not all of us." 1

John ii. 19. Enlightened persons were baptized by the apostles, and received as church-members, and respected as brethren, till they manifested the contrary by their words, or works. Many of them that were baptized, were born of God ; but some of them never got further than this enlightening, and fell away : Some fell into heresy, some into immorality, and some into fanaticism. All the regenerate are enlightened ; but some are enlightened who are never regenerated, and these will fall away. Of these St. Peter speaks, " There
 " shall be false teachers among you, who privily
 " shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying
 " the Lord that bought them, and bring upon
 " themselves swift destruction. For if after they
 " have escaped the pollutions of the world through
 " the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus
 " Christ, they are again intangled therein and
 " overcome ; the latter end is worse with them
 " than the beginning. For it had been better
 " for them not to have known the way of righte-
 " ousness, than after they have known it, to turn
 " from the holy commandment delivered unto
 " them. But it hath happened unto them ac-
 " cording to the true proverb, The dog is turned
 " to his own vomit again ; and, The sow that

“ was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” 2 Peter ii. 1, 20, 21, 22. And St. Paul saith, “ It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, “ and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, “ and have tasted the good word of God, and the “ powers of the world to come; if they shall “ fall away, to renew them again to repentance.” Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. “ For if we sin wilfully after “ that we have received the knowledge of the “ truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, “ but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, “ and fiery indignation, which shall devour the “ adversaries. If any man draw back, my soul “ shall have no pleasure in him.” Heb. x. 26, 27, 38.

Again, there is a faith spoken of, whereby a man may cast out devils, remove mountains, and do many wonderful works : yea, a man may have the gift of prophecy, may speak different languages, may understand mysteries, and have great knowledge ; he may preach surprisingly ; and yet after all be a cast-away, and disowned by the Lord Jesus. See Matt. vii. 22, 23, and 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2.

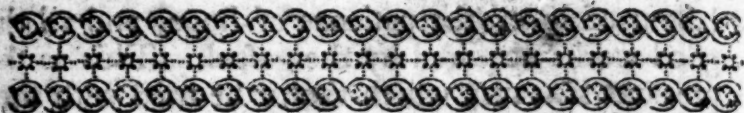
Again, there is a belief of the gospel produced in the heart by the Holy Ghost revealing Jesus Christ, or in other words, opening the understanding to understand the testimony of God concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ ; and fully satisfying and assuring the mind and conscience of the truth thereof. This is the faith unfeigned, which produces a holy life, christian self-denial, bearing the cross of Christ, conformity to the Lord Jesus in heart and life, and a willing but imperfect obedience to the laws of his kingdom in the labour

labour of love, the patience of hope, and all the good works required by the gospel. This is the precious FAITH, which tho' it be tried with fire, will be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. i. 7.

Let every man examine himself impartially in the sight of God; and by the fruits thereof he may judge for himself of what kind his faith is, dead or living, human or divine. "Examine yourselves, saith the apostle Paul, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. xiii. 5. By reprobates he means such as will not bear proof, when they are brought to the touchstone. Such professors of the gospel as are only counterfeits, who will at last be disowned by the Lord of glory as rank hypocrites. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Mark iv. 9.

PART





P A R T II.

On the HOPE of the Gospel.

SECTION I.

Of hope in general, its nature and degrees.

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NOW come to treat of the Hope of the Gospel. And I shall in the first place explain the meaning of the word Hope.

The word hope signifies an expectation of something good, desirable or wished for. In scripture the word hope frequently signifies expectation, and no more. But hope sometimes signifies the things expected or hoped for; and sometimes it signifies both the things expected, and also the expectation of them. I shall illustrate this by some texts of scripture. "The hope of salvation." 1 Thess. v. 8. "The hope of eternal life." Titus iii. 7. "The hope of glory." Col. i. 27. In these texts the word hope signifies expectation and no more. But in the following texts the word hope signifies the things expected, the good things hoped for. "The hope which is laid up for you in heaven." Col. i. 5. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and
" our

“our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Tit. ii. 13. “The hope of Israel.” Acts xxviii. 20. (i. e. the Lord Jesus and his salvation expected by the Israelites. See also 1 Tim. i. 1. and Heb. vi. 18, 19.) When the word hope stands for what many writers call the grace of hope, it means both the good things expected, and also the expectation of them. The christian hope, the hope of the gospel, is a well-grounded expectation of eternal life, and all the glory and happiness in heaven. In this sense the word hope occurs often. “And now abideth faith, hope, charity.” 1 Cor. xiii. 13. “There is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Eph. iv. 4, 5. “God hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace.” 2 Theff. ii. 16. “If we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope.” Heb. iii. 6. “God according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope.” 1 Pet. i. 3. “That ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.” Rom. xv. 13. Thus much may be sufficient to shew the different acceptations of the word hope, and to ascertain the sense or meaning of it in the subject matter, which I am now upon.

It hath been said that every man's hope is of the same kind with his faith; for faith is the ground of hope. Therefore if any man's faith be false, his hope is vain; but if his faith be true, his hope is sure. The faith of the gospel is the ground or foundation of the hope of the gospel, which in my text is expressed by the things hoped for. The hope of the gospel is the expectation of all those good things reported by the gospel not yet seen:

to be saved with an everlasting salvation, Isaiah xlv. 17 ; to be with the Lord Jesus in that place which he is gone to prepare for his people. John xiv. 3 ; to live in the presence of God, " where " there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for ever-
 " more." Psalm xvi. 11. As soon as any man obtains the precious faith of the gospel, he is actually and personally justified, and the hope of the gospel takes place in his heart. Tho' faith, hope, and love be distinct, and tho' faith be prior in order to hope and love : yet faith, hope, and love are all produced in the soul at the same time by the Holy Ghost. God quickens or regenerates by his Spirit, and by his word, all whom he brings into the new covenant. They are all taught to know the Lord, the just God and the Saviour, the Lord their righteousness. The holy law is written on all their hearts. They are all born of God. They are all justified, and they are all sanctified. And all that are justified, are equally justified, and once for ever. All their sins, be they few or many, little or great, are freely and fully forgiven, to be remembered no more. Justification admits of no degrees ; but sanctification doth. All true believers are sanctified ; but they are not all equally sanctified. For there are children, young men, and fathers in Christ. 1 John ii. 13. They are all compleat in Christ ; but none amongst them all are compleat in themselves, or perfectly sanctified in this present life. They are all sanctified in all the faculties of their souls ; but not compleatly sanctified as yet in any one of them. For at present they are all in a growing state. All their understandings are enlightened in the knowledge of the truth ; all their wills are in
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some measure brought into subjection to the will of God, for they are all made a willing people. Psalm cx. 3. Their hearts and affections are in a good measure purified, and they all love God and their neighbours more or less; for the moral law is written on all their hearts.

Yet there is ignorance in all their understandings, tho' some know more of and understand the things of God better than others. All their wills are liable to be refractory; and their hearts and affections may be drawn aside from God by the creature, if not kept by the power of God: so that they are subject to backslidings. Some of them are weak, and others are strong, in the faith. Some are more, others less, conformable to Christ. Yet all of them are conformable to the image of Christ according to the measure of their stature, or growth in grace. Rom. viii. 29. Eph. iv. 13, &c. Some of them bring forth more fruit, others less: yet they all bring forth good fruit, less or more. Some of them are more fervent in love than others, yet they all love the Lord Jesus; for unto them which believe Christ is precious. 1 Pet. ii. 7. All that unfeignedly believe the gospel, have the hope of the gospel in some measure; but some are more lively in hope than others. As there are degrees of faith, so also there are degrees of hope. And there is as great a difference in degrees betwixt hope at first, and the full assurance of hope, as there is in stature betwixt a new-born child, and a full-grown man. In holy scripture there is mention made of the hope of the gospel, of good hope, a lively hope, the confidence and the rejoicing (*καυχῆμα* kauchema, the glorying) of the hope, and the full

full assurance of hope ; whereby, as I conceive, are set forth the different degrees of the hope of the gospel. A good hope is the first but lowest degree of the hope of the gospel, and the full assurance of hope is the highest degree thereof. Children are naturally aspiring, and would be men ; but there must be time for it. None of Adam's posterity have come into the world, as he did, a fully formed and compleat man at once. His offspring grow by degrees from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood. And as they grow in stature by degrees, so also in knowledge and understanding, tho' some grow faster than others in both respects. In like manner, young converts newly come to the faith, having too much of Adam's fallen nature remaining in them, are apt to aspire, and would be at perfection, and at the full assurance of salvation at once. But there must be time for it. God's children grow unto manhood in Christ by degrees ; and tho' some of them grow faster than others ; yet none of them are born fathers, or young men, but little children. It hath been already remarked, that the faith and hope of the gospel have by some writers been confounded together, as if they were but one and the same thing ; and what the apostle Paul calls the Plerophory or the full assurance of hope, they have called *The faith of assurance*. They also maintain, *That a particular application or appropriation of Christ, a confidence or a good degree of assurance of salvation, is in the very nature or essence of true faith*. So that according to them, none truly believe the gospel, and are justified, but they who believe, that the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life thro' Christ are the free gift of God

to themselves in particular. Had they maintained, that a lively hope immediately follows after a man believes, and is justified, they would have been quite right. Or if they had maintained, that such an appropriation or assurance in some degree is in the nature or essence of the hope of the gospel, they would not have been far wide from the truth. Some celebrated writers have maintained the above doctrine. Their meaning might be right, but they have expressed it wrong. I endeavoured afore to shew, that this notion about faith is a mistake, and I proposed to shew, that no man is assured of his eternal salvation upon his first believing the gospel, which is repugnant to their appropriating doctrine, which is still maintained by some now living. They argue, *That God in the word of the gospel maketh an offer of Christ and his righteousness, as a deed of gift or a free gift, to all indefinitely who hear the gospel; and also promiseth remission of sins and eternal life; and further, that God's word is a sufficient warrant to every one to lay claim to the gift; and that faith is a receiving of the gift; but then it must be an appropriating and applying faith. For no man is possessed of a gift till he receives it; but in receiving of it he obtains a special interest in it, which he had not before.* That God by the word of the gospel makes known to all indefinitely who hear it, that he is well pleased in his beloved Son, and that he gives his Son, and remission of sins, and eternal life, to all who unfeignedly believe the gospel with understanding, is as surely true as God's word is true. And that no man is possessed of a gift till he receives it, is also true. Yet the giving of a thing gives a special interest in it, and

and a right to it to him to whom it is given, before the receiving of it. It is also granted, that no man hath Christ, or a special interest in him, but he that receives him. Yet it is not man's receiving Christ, but God's giving him and the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness in him, which give a special interest in him, and power to believe on him. Therefore faith is not a receiving of the gift, But by receiving Christ or believing in him, men get the possession and enjoyment of him. But, Doth any man receive Christ before he believes the gospel? Coming to Christ, receiving or embracing him, looking to him, relying or depending upon him and his divine righteousness, belong to faith, and always accompany it; altho' they may be deemed immediate consequent effects of it. For no man obeys the Father's commandment, "Hear ye him," who doth not believe in Christ. But no man can savingly believe in Christ, before he is revealed or made known to him by the Holy Ghost in the gospel: "How, saith St. Paul, shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard." Rom. x. 14. They must hear, and know, and understand the gospel, or the testimony of God concerning the person of Christ and the work of Christ, before they can believe on him or receive him. And no sooner do they understand the gospel and see the divine evidence of it; but they believe it: and as soon as they believe it, they believe in Christ, and receive him joyfully. Upon believing the gospel, the righteousness of Christ and his whole salvation is freely and effectually given to them: and in believing and living upon Christ, they have the enjoyment of him. It is the

the truth of God, that he who believes God's testimony or the gospel of Christ, and believes on Christ, hath everlasting life, is passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation. He that believes, is justified; and he that is justified, hath peace with God, and is begotten again to a lively hope. As that faith is dead, which doth not bring forth good works; so also is that faith dead, that is not followed less or more with joy and peace, and the hope of salvation, the hope of eternal life, the hope of glory. For this is the true hope of the gospel: and the faith and hope of the gospel are necessarily and inseparably connected together. But then it must be remembered, that faith is in order before hope; for the faith of the gospel is the ground and support of the hope of the gospel.

This good hope through grace, the writers mentioned already have improperly called, I conceive, *the appropriating and applying faith, and the appropriating act of faith*. But then, here is a point in debate. Doth God's word in the gospel either offer, declare, or promise eternal salvation to every hearer of the gospel, or to any one hearer of the gospel in particular?—It is granted, That the gospel declares, not that every hearer thereof, but that every believer thereof shall be saved: and that whosoever believes on Christ, hath everlasting life. But then, Doth every man who believes on him, know assuredly at the very first, that he is a true believer? May not a man believe the gospel and be well persuaded in his own mind, that the gospel is true; and yet doubt and question, whether he himself unfeignedly believes it with understanding? Are there not different sorts of hear-

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ers, and different sorts of believers of the gospel? Do not some hear the gospel, " But the word " preached doth not profit them, not being mixt " with faith in them," (not being believed by them at all?) Heb. iv. 2. Doth not the Lord Jesus make mention of some, who receive the word of the gospel with joy, and believe for a while; but have not root, and afterwards fall away? And doth he not in his own exposition of the parable of the sower recorded by the evangelists, set forth the distinguishing characteristics of the right sort of believers by their understanding the word, keeping the word, and bringing forth fruit with patience? Do not many think, that they believe the gospel, who are mistaken, and deceive their own souls? If then any man lay special claim to Christ and his salvation, before the Holy Ghost bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, doth he not presume? Is he not too hasty and forward? But doth the Holy Ghost bear witness with any man's spirit that he is a child of God, before that man believes the gospel? Or doth the Holy Ghost do it upon a man's first believing, so that he is assured of his salvation? To maintain either appears to me contradictory to the apostolick doctrine. It is granted, that the names of all the redeemed are written in the Lamb's book of life: but who on earth hath read that book? And where is it written in the bible concerning any one now living in this world, that Christ hath loved him, and given himself for him in particular? And doth the Holy Ghost reveal any thing to any man contrary to, or beyond what is contained in the written word of God? Are not believers exhorted to give diligence
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to make their calling and election sure? 2 Pet. i. 10. And to be diligent in the labour of love to the full assurance of hope unto the end? Heb. vi. 11. Was it to the unbelieving world, or to a pure church of Christ gathered out of the world, that the apostle Paul wrote the epistle to the Philippians? Doth it not plainly appear from the express words of the apostle, that he wrote that epistle to a pure church of Christ, a church set in order, having bishops and deacons? He doth not direct the epistle to all the people at Philippi, but "To all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." He thanks God for their fellowship in the gospel, he expresseth how highly he esteemed them, he commends their constant obedience: yet he exhorts them to "Work out their own salvation with fear and trembling," altho' God had made them a willing people. Phil. ii. 12. Why and wherefore are such exhortations to believers, if assurance of salvation be in the very nature and essence of true faith? Or if every man obtain it upon his first believing the gospel? Where then is the ground in the word of God for this particular claim, this particular appropriation, this assurance of salvation, to every, or to any one hearer of the gospel, before he believes it, or upon his first believing of it?

The gospel-offer about which there have been many mistakes, is to publish and declare the gospel to all indefinitely. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark xvi. 15, 16. The gospel promiseth salva-

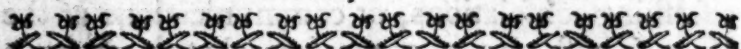
tion to all believers, but not to all hearers. Therefore it is false doctrine to maintain, *That God in the word of the gospel maketh an offer of Christ and his righteousness, and also promiseth remission of sins and eternal life, to all indefinitely who hear the gospel.* For many who have heard the gospel, will be damned. See Matt. vii. 21, &c. Luke xiii. 24, &c. Heb. iv. 2.

Every man that hath the faith of the gospel, must also necessarily have the hope of the gospel. But not all who have the faith and hope of the gospel, have either the confidence and the rejoicing of this hope, or the full assurance of it. The confidence of hope must mean a good degree thereof, which probably may belong to such as have attained to the stature of young men in Christ, who are strong in the Lord, in whom the word of God abides, and who have overcome the wicked one; as St. John describes them. 1 John ii. 14. The full assurance of hope means the greatest certainty, that a man can have of his eternal salvation on this side the grave. It may be well allowed, that all believers have not this assurance, that they shall be absolutely and for ever saved without any possibility of their falling away. This full assurance doth not pertain to such, as are but little children; it can only belong to those, whom St. John calls fathers, who are grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Eph. iv. 13. Yet every new-born babe, every little child of God hath good hope thro' grace. And none are more jealous over themselves, and afraid of falling away, than such new-born babes. It is a good sign of saving grace, when a person is both afraid of sinning, and afraid of falling short. Wheresoever God

puts

puts his fear into any man's heart, it works thus. Upon the revelation of Jesus Christ, and upon believing in him, a man may be very happy and full of divine joy. He may go on without much reflection about his own state, rejoicing in the Lord ; for that which engages the attention at first, is the new discovery of God as a Saviour, a Saviour of sinners. The soul is charmed, and captivated, and enamoured with Jesus Christ. The heart is warm, and well, and all alive. Thus may a man continue for days, and weeks, or months together. And yet afterwards when these refreshing consolations, or communications of the Holy Ghost, are in a measure abated, or for a small space withdrawn, the man is at a loss what to think of himself. He may question, whether it hath not been all a delusion. His heart may be sorely pained, and he dare scarcely rely on Christ. He is ready to do any thing for Christ ; yea, he is willing to suffer for Christ, and to go after him without the camp, bearing his reproach. But being yet weak in the faith, he dare scarce trust in him ; for he is afraid, that he is wrong ; but he knows not whither else to go ; yet he staggers and faints, till he be again refreshed by the comforts of the Holy Ghost. And indeed all believers at first are too apt to live by feelings, joys, and gifts of grace, instead of living by the faith of the Son of God. But the dear Redeemer " feedeth his flock like a shepherd, he gathereth the lambs " with his arm, and carrieth them in his bosom." Isaiah xl. 11. He hath a tender and compassionate heart ; for he is the good shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep. John x. 11, 17. His sheep also love him, and they like very well

to feel and enjoy his love to them. "He hath loved them with an everlasting love, therefore hath he extended his loving kindness unto them." Jer. xxxi. 3. But they love him, because he hath first loved them; and sheds his love abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them. 1 John iv. 19. Rom. v. 5. Their love to him grows by the enjoyment of his love communicated unto them. And as their faith and love grow, their hope increaseth. And when love grows cold, hope languishes.



SECTION II.

How the assurance of Hope is attained.

I SHALL now proceed to set forth how believers grow in grace, and by degrees attain to the confidence, and to the full assurance of hope. And herein I purpose to proceed according to the law and the testimony. For altho' every christian's experience, so far as it is the effect of the influence of the Holy Ghost upon his heart, will answer exactly to what is recorded in the holy scriptures, as face answers to face in a glass: yet all God's people are liable to mistakes. A man's own experience, when it is according to the word of God, is an evidence to himself, but it is no proof to others. And every man ought to examine and try his experience by the word of God, and never set it up for a standard; lest he should get into fancy and delusion. There are false impressions and feelings, as well as true ones. Seducing spirits there
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are many : but the Spirit of truth is one. “ Be-
 “ loved, saith St. John, believe not every spirit,
 “ but try the spirits whether they are of God.”

1 John iv. 1. No man that is taught of God,
 need to be afraid to be tried by the word of truth.

“ Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, nei-
 “ ther cometh to the light, lest his deeds should
 “ be reproved. But he that doeth truth, cometh
 “ to the light, that his deeds may be made mani-
 “ fest, that they are wrought in God.” John iii.

20, 21. “ He that trusteth in his own heart is a
 “ fool : but he that putteth his trust in the Lord,
 “ shall be made fat.” Prov. xxviii. 25, 26.

The Lord Jesus, whose voice his people hear,
 and whom they follow, instructs his disciples how
 to continue in his favour, and to attain to the full
 assurance of hope. “ If ye love me, keep my
 “ commandments. And I will pray the Father,
 “ and he shall give you another Comforter, that
 “ he may abide with you for ever ; even the Spirit
 “ of truth, whom the world cannot receive, be-
 “ cause it seeth him not, neither knoweth him :
 “ but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you,
 “ and shall be in you. I will not leave you com-
 “ fortless ; I will come to you. Yet a little while
 “ and the world seeth me no more : but ye see
 “ me : because I live, ye shall live also. At that
 “ day ye shall know, that I am in my Father, and
 “ you in me, and I in you. He that hath my
 “ commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that
 “ loveth me ; and he that loveth me, shall be
 “ loved of my Father, and I will love him, and
 “ will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto
 “ him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou
 “ wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the
 “ world ?

“ world ? Jesus answered and said unto him, If
 “ a man love me, he will keep my words : and
 “ my Father will love him, and we will come un-
 “ to him, and make our abode with him.” The
 “ Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, he shall
 “ teach you all things, and bring all things to
 “ your remembrance, whatsoever I have said un-
 “ to you.” John xiv. 15, &c. And again,
 “ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide
 “ in my love : even as I have kept my Father’s
 “ commandments, and abide in his love. These
 “ things have I spoken unto you, that my joy
 “ might remain in you, and that your joy might
 “ be full. This is my commandment, That ye
 “ love one another, as I have loved you. Ye are
 “ my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command
 “ you.” John xv. 10. &c. It appears from
 what I have quoted, but more clearly from the
 whole discourse which the Lord Jesus made to his
 disciples just before his death, recorded in the thir-
 teenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth chap-
 ters of St. John’s gospel ; that he promised to his
 disciples, who already had the Spirit of truth, and
 the faith : (for they had made confession of their
 faith, and he had pronounced them clean through
 their believing the truth which he had spoken un-
 to them, that he was the Son of God :) that in
 continuing to believe on him, and in obeying him
 out of love, and in particular, by yielding obedi-
 ence to the new commandment, which he gave
 thrice unto them, they should receive the Holy
 Ghost, the Spirit of truth, in another respect, even
 as the Spirit of adoption, as the Comforter. But
 the Lord Jesus promised to them further, that he
 would manifest himself unto them ; and that if
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they did abide in him or continue to believe on him, which he earnestly exhorts them to do, and continue to do whatsoever he commanded them ; that then they should continue in the enjoyment of his love, and have free access to him in prayer, and have fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and that his joy should remain in them, and that their joy should be full : which St. Peter expounds to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. This is the confidence and the rejoicing, or the glorying, of the hope of the gospel. And thus our Lord plainly points out the way to all his followers, to the end of the world, how to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God, and to attain to the full assurance of hope. They are to keep the faith, and to do whatsoever he hath commanded them ; and then they will find, that in so doing, there is great reward : their souls will be as a watered garden.

Now tho' it is granted, that a man upon believing the gospel is actually justified, and interested in Christ, and hath good hope, and hath joy and peace, which may be very great, and continue a long time together with some, without almost any intermission, tho' not so with all alike : yet this is but an earnest, and the beginning of hope ; it is neither the confidence, nor the full assurance thereof. Neither is such joy a sufficient evidence or proof, that any man is in the faith. For as joys, feelings or impressions, sweet sensations and comforts, illuminations and participations of the gifts of the Holy Ghost are common to them, that believe only for a while, as well as to them that believe to the saving of their souls : to them that believe the word without understanding,
and

and without the love of the truth, as well as to them that understand and believe the truth, and love it : to them that know the Lord in a sense, and escape the pollutions of the world thereby for a time, but are again intangled therein and overcome (2 Pet. ii. 20. Heb. x. 26.) to them who have been reputed as brethren for whom Christ died, as if they had been bought and sanctified by his blood ; (2 Pet. ii. 1. Heb. x. 29.) having been enlightened, and having tasted of the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and having tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and yet after all this fall away : (Heb. vi. 4, &c.) as well as to them who are indeed bought with the blood of Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit through the belief of the truth, and really are in the new covenant, and endure unto the end : therefore it requires other evidence than this to prove, that a man hath the faith of the gospel, or is a believer of the right sort. Therefore the doctrine which some teach, That a man may become perfect at once, or assured of his salvation, by putting forth some sort of an act of faith, is repugnant to the word of God, and contrary to the whole analogy of faith delivered by the Lord Jesus and his apostles. Jesus said, " So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into " ground, and should sleep, and rise night and " day, and the seed should spring up and grow, " he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth " forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the " ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Mark iv. 26, &c. I conceive that our Lord here intimates a growth by degrees, both in the knowledge

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of him, and in the knowledge of a personal interest in him. God generally works gradually both in nature, and in grace. We all have too much of self in us ; but none are so apt to be lifted up, and full of a good conceit of themselves, as those who know least of their own hearts. The nearer a man comes to perfection, the worse opinion he hath of himself. The great apostle Paul thought himself to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints. And his advice is good for all, " Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x. 12. It hath been remarked, that enlightened people, who are not born of God, are very high : and that God humbles those whom he brings into the everlasting covenant ; and tho' upon believing they become happy ; yet they are not apt to reflect much about themselves just at first, whether they are justified, or sanctified, or sealed to the day of redemption. They are full of Christ, charmed and enamoured with Christ ; and intent how to please him. They hate sin, they long to be holy, and to live to the praise and glory of God. They are willing to follow Christ, to deny themselves, and to bear his cross ; and so long as they go on thus, believing, loving, and obeying, they continue happy. If they hear the gospel preached, and mention be made, how persons feel, when they are justified, perhaps they may think, Am I justified ? Are my sins forgiven ? But if they hear no mention made of such things, they may go on well and happily, and make little or no reflection about their personal interest ; but however they are very intent to get to heaven, and they are walking in the right way towards it, and in due time to know assuredly that they

they shall come thither. But if such souls cease to look unto Jesus, and begin to be pleased with themselves and think too highly of themselves, (and this is very natural;) or if they follow their own wills contrary to the will of God, then certainly there will be a withholding of their happiness. Then doubts and fears will arise. And tho' hope should abide at the bottom, yet it is mixt with pain, and attended with fear; and fear hath torment. Then in holy fear, tho' out of love to Christ, but with anxiety of mind, such persons seek the Lord. They pray, long, desire, hunger and thirst after Christ, and earnestly endeavour to do what may be pleasing to him. So they go on working in fear and trembling, as all believers are exhorted to do, Phil. ii. 12. till the Holy Ghost sheds afresh the love of God in their hearts, and gives them joy and peace in believing. Now while believers go on thus believing and obeying, the Holy Ghost will refresh their souls; and every time that he sheds abroad the love of God in their hearts, and fills them with joy, they receive a fresh pledge of God's love to them. Thus their faith is strengthened, their hope increases, their love is renewed: their hearts are enlarged, and they are animated and encouraged to run the christian race, to deny themselves, to bear the cross of Christ, and to follow him; and to be stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and to be fruitful in every good work.

But if such happy persons get into a good conceit of themselves, and be lifted up with pride by admiring themselves, and has Ezekiel expresses it, " Do trust in their own beauty: because they
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“ are decked with ornaments, cloathed with fine
 “ linen, and fed with fine flour, and hony, and
 “ oil; and play the harlot because of their renown:”
 (See Ezek. xvi.) If they begin to live by their
 experience, by their privileges, or by the change
 wrought in them, and the graces communicated
 to them by the Holy Ghost, then they turn from
 Christ. They do not abide in him: they do not
 obey the truth: they do not continue in or keep
 the faith: they do not live by the faith of the Son
 of God, as poor, weak, needy sinners should con-
 stantly do. The blood and righteousness of Christ
 is not then the only ground of their hope, confi-
 dence, glorying and rejoicing. The flesh and
 blood of Christ is not then their only meat and
 drink, the stay, comfort, food and support of their
 souls. They rejoice in themselves, and their glory-
 ing is vain. They get into self-righteousness and
 unbelief, and so lose their strength, and are liable to
 fall into sin. And it is agreeable to corrupt nature,
 and easy to do so. Therefore to keep the faith in
 opposition to the self-righteous bias, which is na-
 tural to man, is one main part of the christian war-
 fare. Strength to obey the commands of Christ
 flows from believing on him. The command-
 ment to believe on him means to continue con-
 stantly believing on him, and to live by what we
 believe of him. Without Christ believers can do
 nothing. He that doth not abide in him, or con-
 tinue to believe on him, will certainly wither.
 When self-righteousness or unbelief prevails, a
 man may soon be drawn away by some lust or o-
 ther, and overcome thereby. And self-righteous-
 ness and the love of the world are as nearly con-
 nected together, as faith and self-denial are. Thus

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true believers may grieve the holy Spirit, and become dry and miserable in their hearts. And if then they endeavour to help themselves by forced working, as it is natural ; or if they would draw comfort and support from any thing of their own either within or without, they are not relieved. Whither then must they go for help ? To the atoning blood and everlasting righteousness and strength of Christ. They can have no help till they look again unto Jesus. He is like the green fir-tree, from him is their fruit found. " They " that dwell under his shadow shall return, they " shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." Hosea xiv. 7, 8. But when believers walk contrary to God's way, then he will also walk contrary unto them, and chastise them. Lev. xxvi. 27, 28. For as many as the Lord loveth, he rebuketh and chasteneth, when they go astray. Rev. iii. 19. And whoever sins, and is not rebuked and corrected for it, hath great reason to suspect himself to be a bastard, and not a son of God. (See Heb. xii. 5, &c. and Psalm lxxxix. 30, &c.) And no child of God hath reason to expect the Holy Ghost as the Comforter, bearing witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God ; unless he keeps the faith, and obeys out of love. It hath been already shewn, that the labour of love, and the patience of hope, are the genuine work of faith ; and the only sure proof, that any one is in the faith : and that the good ground hearers are distinguished from the three other sorts by these three marks : *They understood the word ; they kept the word ; and they brought forth fruit with patience.* (See Matt. xiii. 19 and 23, and Luke viii. 15.) When therefore any man makes any thing, but the blood and

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and righteousness of Christ, the ground of his hope, what proof is there that he hath the faith? When any man lives by any thing else than by the blood and righteousness of Christ, or by eating Christ, what proof is there, that he is keeping the faith? When any man doth not continue in the work of faith, paying regard to all the laws of Christ's kingdom, and particularly to the new commandment, by being fruitful in good works, what proof is there, that he is in the faith? When any man is living by his frames, feelings, manifestations, joys, comforts, experience, exercises of soul, convictions, distresses, heart-work, holiness, duties or any thing else, what proof is there, that he is then living by Christ or keeping the faith? And what proof doth a man give, that he is living by Christ, when he doth not obey his commandments? He that keepeth not his words, doth not love him. John xiv. 24. Have not then all those persons, who rest the evidence of their salvation upon their exercises of soul, their joys, feelings and experience; but do not bring forth the good works required by the gospel, which are the proper fruits of faith, and the only sure proof of it; great reason to suspect themselves to be of the number of the stony-ground, or thorny-ground hearers, or foolish virgins, that have lamps, but want the oil?

St. Peter exhorts all who have obtained precious faith in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, “ to give all diligence to add to their
 “ faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and
 “ to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance,
 “ patience; and to patience, godliness; and to
 “ godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brother-

“ ly kindness, charity. For if these things be in
 “ you, and abound, they make you that ye shall
 “ neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the know-
 “ ledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that
 “ lacketh these things, is blind, and cannot see
 “ far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged
 “ from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, bre-
 “ thren, give diligence to make your calling and
 “ election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall
 “ never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministred
 “ to you abundantly, into the everlasting king-
 “ dom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
 2 Pet. i. 5, &c.

St. James also saith, “ What doth it profit,
 “ though a man say he hath faith, and have
 “ not works?” (he means the labour of love
 done in obedience to the new commandment.)
 “ Can faith (*such a dead faith*) save him? If a
 “ brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily
 “ food; and one of you say unto them, Depart
 “ in peace, be ye warmed and filled: notwith-
 “ standing ye give them not those things which
 “ are needful to the body; what doth it profit?”
 What proof is there, that such a one hath true
 faith? He shews it in word and tongue, but not
 in deed and truth. And so he manifests that his
 faith is dead, because it works not by love. And
 afterwards he sets forth how Abraham’s faith
 wrought with his works, and thereby was made
 perfect, or attained to its full growth, and mani-
 fested or displayed itself. Abraham manifested
 and clearly proved, that he was a true believer, by
 his chearful, ready and willing obedience to the
 will of God, even when he was put to a very hard
 trial. Abraham was justified, when he believed
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the promise, according to St. Paul's sense of * justification : for St. Paul treats of the justification of ungodly sinners before God, and how they are made righteous. But Abraham was proved, manifested, and declared to be justified ; when he would have offered his son Isaac upon the altar. And this is St. James's sense of justification : for St. James is not treating, how sinners are constituted or made righteous ; but how believers who are already justified, are manifested, proved, and declared to be so. And the Lord Jesus at the day of judgment will manifest and declare, who were justified here, by the works of love done to his people for his sake. Now when Abraham had given good proof of his faith, God renewed his promise to him, and confirmed it by his oath, that he would surely bless him. Then God gave to Abraham the assurance of his salvation, and of fulfilling every thing, that he had promised to him.

St. Paul likewise in Hebrews vi. having set forth what is common to those who are enlightened and believe for a while, and to those who believe to the saving of their souls, being regenerated and in the new covenant, plainly points out the difference between them, whereby they may be distinguished ; and expressly mentions THE LABOUR OF LOVE, obedience to the new commandment. And he desires them to shew the same diligence in
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* There are two general senses of justification. To make just ; and to declare just. Sinners are made just or justified by the blood and righteousness of Christ imputed to them upon believing the gospel. Believers are declared just or are made manifest that they are justified by their good works.

that work and labour of love, by continuing to minister to the saints for Christ's sake, " To the " full assurance of hope unto the end." For he only shall be saved, that endures unto the end ; who continues in the faith, and in the work of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. " But if any man " draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in " him." Heb. x. 38.

The same apostle also in his epistle to the Ephesians, who were sealed with the holy Spirit, makes mention of their faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints. And he prayed for them, that God would give unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that they might understand, and know the hope of his calling, and the exceeding greatness of his power toward them who believe : and that he would grant unto them according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man ; that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith ; that they being rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fulness of God. He reminds them that they had been sinners, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others ; and that their salvation was of mere grace, and not of works. But he tells them, that they were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that they should walk in them. And he beseeches them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, (and not as other men walked

walked in the vanity of their minds, who were alienated from the life of God, and past feeling, and had given themselves over to work all uncleanness :) and to be careful not to grieve the holy Spirit by committing sin ; but to follow Christ, and walk in love, and to shun all sin both in thought, word, and deed : for because of sin comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Therefore he exhorts them to walk as children of God in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth, and to prove what is acceptable unto the Lord ; and to be circumspect and wise, and to redeem the time ; and to perform the religious, relative, and moral duties ; and to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

“ Put on, saith he, the whole armour of God,
 “ that ye may be able to stand against the wiles
 “ of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh
 “ and blood, but against principalities, against
 “ powers, against the rulers of the darkness of
 “ this world, against spiritual wickedness in high
 “ places. Wherefore take unto you the whole
 “ armour of God, that you may be able to with-
 “ stand in the evil-day, and having done all, to
 “ stand. Stand therefore, *(like brave soldiers of*
 “ *Christ)* having your loins girt about with truth,
 “ and having on the breast-plate of righteous-
 “ ness ;” *(Let the leading truth of the gospel, that*
God is well pleased in his Son, be the girdle of your
loins ; and let your confidence in the righteousness of
Christ be your breast-plate.) “ And your feet
 “ shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”
(Walk as becomes the gospel. Observe all things com-
manded by the Lord Jesus. Bear love and good will
towards all men, especially to the people of God ; and
be

be ready to every good word and work,) “ Above all
 “ or to all the rest, taking the shield of faith, where-
 “ with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts
 “ of the wicked.” (*Believe every word of God,*
every precept, every promise, every threatening. Trust
in the Lord at all times, let him be the stay and strength
of your souls, your refuge and resting place. But trust
not in yourselves, or in any thing of your own ; have
no confidence in the flesh. He that abides in Christ, is
kept by God's power through faith, and the devil can-
not hurt him.) “ And take the helmet of salva-
 “ tion, and the sword of the Spirit, which is
 “ the word of God :” (*Let the hope of salvation*
animate you ; and when ye are tempted, fight your
enemies with the word of God, as the Lord Jesus
did, when he was tempted, saying, thus it is writ-
ten.) “ Praying always with all prayer and sup-
 “ plication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto
 “ with all perseverance and supplication for all
 “ saints.”

Christians should pray constantly, and not faint.
 They should pray in private, and also join in the
 assemblies of the saints in prayer, in thanksgiving,
 in singing psalms and hymns, in hearing the word,
 and in the celebration of the Lord's Supper,
 and in contributing according to their several abi-
 lities to the necessity of the saints, all which are
 means to attain to the full assurance of hope, and
 especially the two last. For in the Lord's Sup-
 per believers commemorate, that the Lord Jesus
 died for them, that his body was broken for
 them, and that his blood was shed for the remis-
 sion of their sins : and in communicating to the
 necessity of his people, they give proof of their
 love

love to him, and of their obedience to his new commandment.*

St. John likewise plainly shews, how believers come to know, and to be assured or satisfied in their own hearts, that they are of the truth, or in the faith. “ For this, saith he, is the message that
 “ ye heard from the beginning, that we should
 “ love one another. We know that we have pas-
 “ sed from dead unto life, because we love the
 “ brethren : he that loveth not his brother, abideth
 “ in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a
 “ murderer : and ye know that no murderer hath
 “ eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive
 “ we the love of God, because he laid down his
 “ life for us : and we ought to lay down our lives
 “ for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s
 “ good, and seeth his brother have need, and
 “ shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him,
 “ how dwelleth the love of God in him ? My
 “ little children, let us not love in word, neither
 “ in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And
 “ hereby we know that we are of the truth, and
 “ shall assure our hearts before him. For if our
 “ heart condemn us, God is greater than our
 “ heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our
 “ heart condemn us not ; then have we confi-
 “ dence towards God. And whatsoever we ask,
 “ we receive of him, because we keep his com-
 “ mand-
 “ mand-”

* The contribution or offering usually made in most churches at the Lord’s Supper is very proper at that time. In the primitive church it was called sacrifice, and *κοινωνια* koinonia, the communion or the fellowship. The apostle Paul saith, “ But to do good, and to communi-
 “ cate, forget not : for with such sacrifices God is well
 “ pleased.” Heb. xiii. 16. See 2 Cor. viii. 4.

“ mandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him : and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.”

1 John iii. 11, 14, &c. From hence it appears, that believers, by keeping the Father's commandment; which is to believe on the name of Jesus Christ ; and by obeying the new commandment, not in word, but in works ; attain the testimony of their own heart or conscience, that they are of the truth : herein also they have the sure testimony of the word of God, whereby they are to try and judge themselves. And the Holy Ghost, as the Comforter, will be given to them, by whose testimony they will know and be satisfied, that they are children of God. For altho' believers should have the testimony of their own consciences tried by the word, and thereby have rejoicing in themselves : yet they would not be quite satisfied without the testimony of the Holy Ghost, who seals them, and bears witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God. (See Rom. viii. 15, 16. Eph. iv. 30.)

From what hath been said, it may be concluded, that the assurance of hope, the sure knowledge of salvation or of a man's personal interest in Christ, stands on the testimony of a man's own conscience tried by the word of God, and on the sure testimony of the word of God, the marks and proofs laid down in the holy scriptures ; and on that which crowns the other two, the sure testimony of

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of the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of adoption, or the Comforter, who sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, fills it with divine joy and peace, and sometimes with a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. And thus believers abound in Hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Rom. xv. 13. And the way whereby they attain to the full assurance of hope, is plainly enough pointed out by the Lord Jesus and his apostles.



SECTION III.

Of self-examination and the witness of the Spirit.

NOW if any man would try himself by the word of God, and examine himself, whether he is in the faith? Let him first weigh and consider well, *what* he believes, *in what* he trusts, or *by what* he hopes to be saved? If he hopes to be saved by his own worth or works, or experiences, either in whole or in part, then his foundation is not according to the scriptures. But if upon serious examination he finds that he believes the testimony of God concerning the person of Christ and the work of Christ: that he believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, God and man in one person, the true God and eternal life; and that his righteousness is sufficient to save sinners and the alone cause of their salvation; and that he makes the testimony of God the spring of his hope; and that he makes Jesus Christ his only foundation, and that his whole trust and confidence is in him and in his blood and righteousness only;

only; this foundation is according to the scriptures. In order then to try whether this is indeed his faith, let him weigh and consider well, what influence and effect it hath upon his heart and life; and whether it produces the fruits of righteousness? And herein he must try himself by the scripture-evidence, the fruits of faith, which have been set forth. Let him examine, whether he hates and forsakes sin; whether he denies ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lives soberly, righteously, and godly; whether he loves the Lord Jesus, and out of love to him is willing to deny himself, and to bear the cross, and to follow him in obedience to the will of God in all things whatsoever he hath commanded: and whether he loves the people of God, not in word, but in deed, and in truth?

It is granted, that upon strict examination a man may be ashamed and confounded to find that he comes so much short of his duty, and is so little conformable to the holy Jesus; and yet he may have the testimony of his conscience, that he does believe the testimony of God concerning Christ: and that that with the work of Christ is the only ground of his hope, and the spring of his joy: and that it is the purpose and desire of his heart to please God, and that he doth not love sin, or allow of it; but that he doth willingly, tho' imperfectly, obey the Lord, and hath respect to all his sayings, and doth bring forth good fruit, and is ready to serve the people of God out of love to Christ. The apostle Paul saith, "Let every man, "prove his own work, and then shall he have re- "joicing in himself. But if a man think him- "self to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth

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deceiveth himself." (Gal. vi. 4, 3.) As every man certainly doth, who thinks himself to be a believer, when his conversation is contrary to the gospel of Christ, and his faith neither overcomes the world, nor works by love. And he that doubts whether Christ be the true God, hath reason to suspect whether the holy Ghost hath taught him: for all God's people are taught by the Holy Ghost to know Jesus to be Jehovah, God manifest in the flesh. Jer. xxxi. 34. And how can such a man confide in Christ's righteousness? And he that cannot trust in Christ's righteousness, doubts the testimony of God, and therefore hath reason to suspect his faith.

But if upon examination a man have the verdict of his own conscience, that he doth believe in the Lord Jesus, and that he hath love to the people of God, and is ready to serve them as he hath opportunity and ability; and yet nevertheless is not satisfied about his own personal interest in Christ, then let him continue in the faith, trusting only in Jesus Christ, drawing all his hope of salvation from the testimony of God and the blood and obedience of Christ; and let him go on in the strength of Christ, observing and obeying all things whatsoever the Lord Jesus hath commanded, and in due time he will receive satisfaction, if he faint not. The Spirit of God will bear witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. This appears plainly from the following words of the Lord Jesus. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John viii. 31, 32. "He
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“ that hath my commandments, and keepeth
 “ them, he it is that loveth me : and he that
 “ loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and
 “ I will love him, and will manifest myself to
 “ him.” John xiv. 21.

It may be observed, that although I deny, that any man is assured of his eternal salvation before he believes the gospel, or upon his first believing it ; yet I maintain that faith unfeigned cannot be without a lively hope and fervent charity in some measure or degree. As soon as any man believes the gospel unfeignedly with understanding, the Hope of eternal life springs up in his heart, and he finds rest unto his soul in the Lord Jesus. As the body without the spirit is dead, as faith without works is dead, so also is that faith dead, which is not accompanied or followed with a good Hope of being saved through grace.

Be it also observed, that I have limited no time, how long it is, or how long it must be, before a true believer is assured of his salvation. The spirit of adoption is one of the peculiar privileges of the new testament church : and therefore every one that has the same precious faith with the apostles, must have the spirit of adoption in some measure or degree. The spirit of bondage was the state of the Saints of the old testament church in general : because the promised Messiah had not fulfilled the work of redemption. The apostles believed in the Lord Jesus, and were justified, before our Lord's death ; for he himself pronounced that they were clean : (John xiii. 10.) but they themselves did not receive the Holy Ghost as the Comforter, till after our Lord's resurrection ; and they were ignorant of the nature of his kingdom
 till

till the day of Pentecost. (See John xx. 19, to 30. Acts i. 6.) I conceive that all true believers enter into rest immediately after they have believed. And they have a good hope of their eternal salvation. And they have the spirit of adoption in their degree, and also rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And further, I allow that the very first time that the Holy Ghost seals a believer, or bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, that then he may say in truth at that time, that Christ hath loved him, and given himself for him. But tho' a believer can say so at that time; yet while he is weak in faith, and neither grounded nor settled in the faith, nor confirmed in the hope of the gospel, doubts and fears and suspicions may arise after that, when he is not under the refreshing consolations of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands sure; the Lord knows them that are his: the sealing on God's part remains firm and sure: but the believer is not fully satisfied about it in his own conscience. And from hence arise his doubts and fears; which do him no harm; but serve to quicken him to give diligence, to make his calling and election sure.

But when a believer abides in Christ, and Christ's words abide in him, and he continues to go on thus diligently and faithfully, then by repeated experience of the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, he will become very lively and strong in the hope of the gospel. And after the Holy Ghost, having sealed him to the day of redemption, hath confirmed him in the hope of the gospel, by powerfully bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, shedding the love of God abundantly abroad in his heart,

filling his soul with the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and with joy unspeakable and full of glory; thenceforward he will hardly be troubled with any more doubts about his eternal salvation, unless he should backslide shamefully, or fall into gross sin; whereby he grieves the holy Spirit exceedingly, and desperately wounds his own conscience, and thereby comes under the fore displeasure and heavy chastisement of almighty God. In such cases the Lord may send upon a believer wonderful and great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Yea, the Lord his God may give him a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And his life shall hang in doubt, and he shall fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of his life. In the morning he shall say, Would God it were even: and at the even he shall say, Would God it were morning, for the fear of his heart wherewith he shall fear. So that he shall be mad, for the sight of his eyes which he shall see. (See Deut. xxviii. 15, &c.) And generally great pride of heart, or a high and haughty spirit, goeth before such a dreadful fall.

But he that walks humbly, walks surely. He that abides faithful, shall abound in hope. And by repeated enjoyment of the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, his love will be perfected. And perfect love casts out the fear of coming short. 1 John iv. 18. "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace." Rom. viii. 6. Therefore all true believers, who continue steadfastly in the faith, and give diligence in the labour of love, and in a cheerful obedience to all the com-

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commandments of Christ, shall walk under the light of God's countenance ; they will go from strength to strength ; they will make their calling and election sure ; they will know the truth, and thereby be made free ; they will attain to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Such will have the testimony of their own conscience, and the testimony of the word of God, and the testimony of the Holy Ghost bearing witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God.



S E C T I O N I V .

Some common Mistakes pointed out.

I SHALL here point out some mistakes.

Those writers and preachers, who maintain that the assurance of salvation, the assurance of hope, comes by a direct act of faith, or by an appropriating act of faith, or by any other sort of an act of faith, are mistaken : for the assurance of hope, the assurance of eternal salvation, comes by the testimony of a believer's own conscience, and by the testimony of the word and spirit of God, as hath been set forth.

Again, a man may have the one faith, and be a happy man ; and yet be ignorant of several of the doctrines contained in the scriptures. But every believer ought diligently to search the scriptures, and to pray that his understanding may be enlightened in the knowledge of the things of God. St. Paul saith, " Brethren, be not children " in understanding ; but in understanding be men."

1 Cor. xiv. 20. And it is also written, " That
 " the soul be without knowledge, it is not good." Prov. xix. 2. On the contrary, a man may hold a system of doctrines clearly and connectedly, and yet be an unconverted man : he may be a strenuous advocate for the doctrine of particular redemption, and yet he himself may prove to be a reprobate at last. Some are more apt to judge and condemn others for their ignorance, than to judge themselves, and to examine whether they themselves are in the faith. It is to be feared, that some make the doctrine of election their foundation, instead of Christ and his righteousness ; and because they believe the doctrine of election, they conclude that they are elected. But this may prove a fatal error to them.

Again, some writers and preachers lay down so many steps and stages of conviction ; and speak of so many different acts of faith, for which they have no authority in the word of God, that they greatly perplex the minds of serious people. But this is not the worst of it. Such doctrine hath a tendency to teach people to establish their own righteousness, and to turn away their minds from the atonement made by the blood of Christ, and from his everlasting righteousness. For serious persons, when they hear such doctrine, will be very apt to examine and search into themselves, whether they have gone through such exercises of soul, and whether they have put forth such acts of faith ; and if they think that they have not, they will be perplexed and distressed to no purpose ; but if they think that they have, then, unless God prevents it, they will be ready to build upon such things, and from thence they will

will be apt to draw hope that they are right, and shall be saved ; and so may get into a fond conceit of themselves to their own loss and damage. But whoever derives his hope of salvation from any other source than the word of God and the blood and righteousness of Christ is in a great error.

Again, The doctrine of a sinless perfection, which some have warmly maintained by writing and preaching, is another error, which hath a two-fold evil tendency. It oppresses and greatly distresses weak believers, who feel the corruptions of their own sinful nature, and yet long to be holy, and groan for deliverance ; and it sets them (when they are persuaded to believe it) upon a self-working and wrestling to attain it, instead of going to Christ as poor and helpless sinners as they feel themselves to be, and hoping only in his mercy. But this is not the worst evil. For, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him ; he knows when to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to open the prison to them that are bound. It doth the most mischief to those, who think that they have attained it, and really believe that they are perfect : it fills them with vain imaginations, and a very fond conceit of themselves. And no wonder, if such should fall into gross sins, and strange delusions. This doctrine is repugnant to the whole analogy of faith. St. John the favourite disciple wrote his first epistle to the churches ; not to the unconverted world, but to the believers, as appears from this passage. “ These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God.” 1 John v. 13. Yet he saith to them, and he ranks himself amongst them,

“ I

“ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John i. 8, 9. He that hath no sin, hath none to confess, or to be forgiven : So he hath no need to pray any more, as the Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “ Forgive us our debts.” Matt. vi. 12. But it would be well for such persons to weigh themselves in the ballance of the sanctuary, to examine themselves by the most holy law of God, and consider well, whether they fulfil every jot and tittle of it in thought, word, and deed. If they offend in one point, they are sinners : and God’s commandment is exceeding broad. (See Psalm cxix. 96.)

Again, there are some men, who were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and received the good word of God with joy, and escaped the pollutions of the world for a while, but afterwards grew lukewarm, and were again entangled by the world and overcome : yet they support themselves by their past experience, and by the doctrine of final perseverance, and hope that they shall do well at last. But their hope may prove to be the vain hope of the hypocrite, that shall perish. And it certainly will, unless they are roused out of their spiritual lethargy. For men may experience all that such persons have experienced, and yet nevertheless be unregenerated, and never brought into the everlasting covenant. The five foolish virgins were enlightened, and made a great profession of religion ; perhaps they might think themselves to be the elect of God, and the favourites of the Most High ; and never question-

ed their interest in Christ; because they took it for granted, that their feelings and impressions and joys were sufficient proof and evidence that they belonged to Christ. But they went down to the grave with a lye in their right hand (Isaiah xlv. 20) and never found out their fatal mistake, till the door of heaven was shut upon them. Awake, ye that slumber, if ye be in Christ; arise and trim your lamps. "Watch, (*and be ready*) "for ye know neither the day nor the hour where-
"in the Son of man cometh." Matt xxv. 13.

Again, true believers are too apt to live by other things, than by Christ alone. This is a practical error, which hath worse tendencies than we are soon aware of. It is the duty of every believer to keep the faith, and constantly to live by believing in Christ. This seems to some to be a very little matter, so they give little attention to it; they almost overlook it. But it is a momentous matter, a lesson that is not soon nor easily learned. Man fell by unbelief; and he is slow of heart to believe what God hath spoken. Luke xxiv. 25. To keep the faith in opposition to the natural propensity which is in us all to live by our own righteousness, or something of our own, is the principal part of the christian warfare. It is like the pendulum in a clock, which moves all the wheels; and if the pendulum stop, then the whole clock stands. All our strength to obey flows from believing in Christ. He that abideth not in Christ, is cast forth as a branch, and is withered. He that abideth in him, bringeth forth much fruit. John xv. 5, 6. The apostle Paul both did. and suffered a great deal for Christ; and he had extraordinary gifts, and uncommon experience; yet the

the greatest thing, that he saith of himself at last, is this, " I have kept the faith." 2 Tim. iv. 7. There is but one bread which God hath provided for his children to live by. And the bread of God is He, who came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. He that eateth his flesh, and drinketh his blood, dwelleth in him, and He in him. He that eateth of this bread, shall live for ever. (See John vi.) But he that lives by any thing else, erreth from the faith, and will hurt his own soul. Whoever then rests on, and lives by his frames, feelings, endeavours, manifestations, joys, comforts, experience, exercises of soul, heart-work, inward or outward holiness, works or duties, or even by what affords the greatest satisfaction to a child of God, I mean the testimony of the Holy Ghost bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, is then erring from the faith, and straying from the right path. For Christ is the believer's resting place, and his proper food is the blood and righteousness of Christ, by which alone he ought to live. " I rejoiced greatly, saith St. John, that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." 2 John 4. By walking in truth he means keeping the faith, continuing in the faith, believing in Christ and his righteousness, and living thereby. For, " This is his (the Father's) commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." 1 John iii. 23. And again, " These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, " and

“ and that ye may believe on the name of the Son
 “ of God.” 1 John v. 13. To be assured of
 being saved with an everlasting salvation, is a very
 great blessing, and a cordial to the soul. But he
 that hath it, ought not to live by that; but by
 Christ. All the heavenly frames, sweet sensations,
 manifestations of God’s love, all the joys and com-
 forts, which are the gifts of the Holy Ghost, are
 all and each of them valuable blessings, for which
 God’s people should be thankful, and whereby
 they should be animated to run with patience the
 race set before them; but they should not live by
 them; but by the testimony of God, or by
 Christ. Every moving of the Holy Spirit within
 a man; and whatever the Spirit works in the heart,
 is good and precious work. All God’s people are
 holy: for without holiness no man shall see the
 Lord: Heb. xii. 14. All the works and duties of
 believers, which are done in faith and love which
 is Christ Jesus, are pleasing to God. All the
 doctrines revealed in the book of God ought to be
 regarded and believed. The precious promises
 are recorded for the comfort and encouragement of
 God’s people in trials and temptations, and when
 they are under the cross of Christ: But it is the
 work of the Holy Ghost to bring them to their
 remembrance, to their joy. And believers should
 use the word of God, the promises, threatenings,
 and precepts thereof, as the Lord Jesus did when
 he was on earth. Believers also should conscienti-
 ously observe all the ordinances appointed by the
 Lord, and they should earnestly seek the Lord’s
 face and fellowship with him in the performance
 of them all. But believers are not to live by
 them; but by Christ himself.

I hope

I hope the reader will understand my meaning ; and not run from one extreme to another. I caution believers to take heed that they do not live by any thing done in them, or done by them, or by any blessings or gifts of grace which they have received : for if they do, it will turn their minds from Christ, and lead them into selfishness and pride and vain glory, and the end of it will be loss and shame. I exhort them to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and as needy and dependent creatures to hang on him, and to live by him, or by what they believe of him upon the testimony of God concerning him ; and chearfully and with all their heart to serve him by yielding obedience to all things whatsoever he hath commanded. By beholding him they will be changed into his image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) They will neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord. Precious faith cannot be without a lively hope. Believers should by no means be careless and indifferent, whether they continue in Christ's love, whether they walk under the light of God's countenance, and have fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or not. It ought to be the daily care and concern of every child of God, how to walk and to please God. He that hath not fellowship with God, hath good reason to suspect, whether all be right and well between him and his Redeemer : whether he hath not grieved the Holy Spirit by unbelief, pride, indulging himself in something wrong, or by neglecting prayer or some other duty. Read the song of Solomon, and there you may see the heart and affections of the church towards the bridegroom.

“ L

" Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth :
 " for thy love is better than wine. Because of the
 " favour of thy good ointments, thy name is as
 " ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins
 " love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee :
 " we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will re-
 " member thy love more than wine : the upright
 " love thee. As the apple-tree among the trees
 " of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.
 " I sat down under his shadow with great delight,
 " and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought
 " me to the banqueting house, and his banner
 " over me was love. Stay me with flaggons,
 " comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love."

St. John saith, " If we walk in the light, as
 " God is in the light, we have fellowship one
 " with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ
 " his Son cleanseth us from all sin. And these
 " things write we unto you, that your joy may
 " be full." 1 John i. 7, 4. The Lord Jesus
 said, " I am the bread of life, he that cometh
 " to me shall never hunger; and he that believ-
 " eth on me, (*continues believing in him*) shall
 " never thirst." John vi. 35. And he said,
 that his Spirit should be in his people, " A well of
 " water springing up into everlasting life." John
 iv. 14. And the Lord saith, " Harken dili-
 " gently unto me, and eat ye that which is good,
 " and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Isa.
 lv. 2. " Therefore with joy shall ye draw water
 " out of the wells of salvation." Isa. xii. 3.
 The Lord Jesus would have his people to abide in
 him, and to obey him chearfully, and to conti-
 nue in his love and be happy. " These things,
 " saith he, have I spoken unto you, that my joy
 p " might

“ might remain in you, and that your joy might
 “ be full.” John xv. 11.



SECTION V.

Of the Things hoped for not yet seen.

I SHALL now proceed to speak more largely and particularly of the things hoped for, not yet seen. I have already spoken of the blessings consequent upon believing the gospel : and in setting forth, how believers attain to the full assurance of hope, I have shewn, that there is an increase of their happiness, provided that they keep the faith, and chearfully do whatsoever Christ hath commanded them. For, “ Great peace have
 “ they which love God’s law.” Psal. cxix. 165. And, “ Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the
 “ holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God
 “ which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth
 “ thee by the way which thou shouldest go. O
 “ that thou hadst harkened to my commandments !
 “ then had thy peace been as a river.” Isa. xlviii. 17, 18. For the Lord will keep him in much peace, whose mind is stayed on him : because he trusts in the Lord. Isa. xxvi. 3. But believers at present are in a state of warfare ; therefore they must not expect absolute and uninterrupted happiness on this side the grave. In the Lord Jesus they may have peace ; but in the world they must expect tribulation. John xvi. 33. The apostle Paul observes with regard to his own experience, that after he had been caught up into paradise,
 “ Left

“ Lest he should be exalted above measure through
 “ the abundance of the revelations, there was
 “ given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger
 “ of satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted
 “ above measure.” 2 Cor. xii. 1, &c. After
 very great blessings and extraordinary joys frequently follow great trials and temptations. David in his prosperity said, “ I shall never be moved.
 “ Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain
 “ tain to stand strong.” But his next words are,
 “ Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.” Psalm xxx. 6, 7. When a believer is full of joy, he is in a happy frame: but he is not perhaps at such times the strongest, or in a situation, which is most safe from temptation. When a believer is poor in spirit, very low in himself, and deeply sensible of his own weakness and unworthiness; altho’ it may cause some pain and smart of heart unto him, and make him to pray earnestly and to cry to the Lord, yea, to hunger and thirst for fresh supplies of grace: yet he is then strong, and in a growing state, and in a good situation. The apostle Paul saith of himself, “ When I am
 “ weak, then am I strong.” 2 Cor. xii. 10. But in my opinion, a child of God is in the very best and safest state, when his heart being warmed, and melted, and enamoured with the love of the dear Lamb of God, he is also at the same time humbled in the dust, and bowed down with shame, under a sense of his own poverty: so that he blushes to think, that such grace should be so freely given to such a poor and unworthy creature. For then he comes nearest to the heavenly state, wherein the redeemed are represented as casting down their crowns from a sense that they did not
 P 2 deserve

deserve them ; and yet at the same time with hearts glowing with love and gratitude, and transported and ravished with joy, sing, " Worthy " is the Lamb that was slain, who hath redeemed us to God by his blood." But God's people in this present world experience different frames or states. They have here joys and consolations, and also crosses and temptations. However God makes all things work together for their good. Rom. viii. 28. They have good things at present, and e'er long they will have better things ; but they will have their best things at last.

" It is appointed unto men once to die." Heb. ix. 27. And the hour of death is an awful season. " But the righteous hath hope in his death." Prov. xiv. 32. For, " Precious in the sight of " the Lord, is the death of his saints." Psalm cxvi. 15. " The sting of death is sin : " 1 Cor. xv. 56. But when sin is pardoned, the sting of death is taken away. Death entered into the world by sin ; and death passeth upon all men, for that all have sinned : Rom. v. 12. Sin reigns unto death : but death will put an end to sin in the children of God. All believers do not die in the same triumphant manner ; yet when they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they shall fear no evil : for the Lord is with them, his rod and his staff they comfort him. Psalm xxiii. 4. And, " Blessed are the dead which die " in the Lord, from henceforth : Yea, saith the " Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; " and their works do follow them." Rev. xiv. 13. At death there will be a full end of all their crosses, all their temptations, all their trials, and of all their sinful corruptions. The good angels will

will carry their souls into Abraham's bosom. And,
 " There the wicked cease from troubling : and
 " there the weary be at rest." Job iii. 17.

In the separate state their souls will be at rest. There they will enjoy the sweet and comfortable fellowship of their brethren in Christ, who lived, and died before them. Fellowship with the people of God is a comfortable refreshment in this imperfect state ; then it will be more pure. There they will be free from sorrow : there it will be better with them than it was here : and there they will contentedly wait in hope of better things to come.

St. John in the Revelation saith, " And a voice
 " came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God,
 " all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both
 " small and great. And I heard as it were the voice
 " of a great multitude, and as the voice of many
 " waters, and as the voice of mighty thundrings,
 " saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent
 " reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." Rev. xix. 5, &c. And again, St. John saith, " And I saw thrones, and they sat
 " upon them, and judgment was given unto them :
 " and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded
 " for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of
 " God, and which had not worshipped the beast,
 " neither his image, neither had received his

“ mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ;
 “ and they lived and reigned with Christ a thou-
 “ sand years. But the rest of the dead lived not
 “ again until the thousand years were finished.
 “ This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is
 “ he that hath part in the first resurrection : on
 “ such the second death hath no power, but they
 “ shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and
 “ reign with him a thousand years.” Rev. xx.
 4, &c. I know that some men say, that the first
 resurrection is to be understood in a spiritual sense :
 but if so, why not also the second ? But, “ There
 “ shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the
 “ just and unjust.” Acts xxiv. 15. “ And
 “ they that have done good shall come forth unto
 “ the resurrection of life ; and they that have
 “ done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”
 John v. 29. And those that have done good, and
 are not recompensed here, shall be recompensed
 at the resurrection of the just. (See Luke xiv.
 12, &c.)

How, or where, or when, this glorious reign
 of Christ shall be, I do not say. But I believe
 that there will be such a state, because it is revealed
 in the scriptures. The saints shall reign on the
 earth. See Rev. v. 10. Daniel vii. 14, 18, 27.
 And this is one of the good things to come, not
 yet seen. It may be presumed, that this will be
 as happy a state at least, as Adam had before he
 fell, if not better. For the second Adam, the
 Lord Jesus, will be there in person among his
 people. And the people of God will have better
 things then, than they have now in this present
 world.

Another good thing hoped for at the resurrecti-
 on

on is, That the present vile body shall be changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Phil. iii. 21. “ For this
 “ corruptible must put on incorruption, and this
 “ mortal must put on immortality. So when
 “ this corruptible shall have put on incorruption,
 “ and this mortal shall have put on immortality,
 “ then shall be brought to pass the saying that is
 “ written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O
 “ death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is
 “ thy victory? 1 Cor. xv. 53. &c. Thence-
 forward the saints will have no more sickness, nor
 sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, nor misery, nor
 plague, nor death.

Again, when the day of the Lord shall come;
 “ In the which the heavens shall pass away with a
 “ great noise, and the elements shall melt with
 “ fervent heat, and the earth and all the works
 “ that are therein shall be burnt up :” 2 Pet. iii.
 10. “ When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed
 “ from heaven with his mighty angels, in flam-
 “ ing fire, taking vengeance on them that know
 “ not God, and that obey not the gospel of our
 “ Lord Jesus Christ : who shall be punished with
 “ everlasting destruction from the presence of the
 “ Lord, and from the glory of his power : when
 “ he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and
 “ to be admired in all them that believe” 2 Thess.
 i. 7. &c. “ When Christ shall appear, then shall
 “ his people also appear with him in glory.”
 Col. iii. 4. The day of judgment will be a day
 of honour and triumph to the people of God :
 but to the wicked it will be a day of horror and
 dreadful dismay. They will wish for the rocks and
 mountains to fall on them to hide them from the
 face

face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb : for the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ? Rev. vi. 16, 17. But the people of God will lift up their heads, and sing for joy of heart. " Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, " and he will save us : this is the Lord, we have " waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in " his salvation." Isa. xxv. 9. Then will the Lord God take away the rebuke of his people, and wipe away their tears. He will pronounce and declare them just and blessed. He will make mention to their praise of their works of love done for his name's sake. He will confess them to be his people before angels, men, and devils. He will give them crowns of glory. He will grant unto them to sit with him in his throne. Rev. iii. 21. " Know ye not, O St. Paul, that the saints " shall judge ? Know ye not that we " shall judge ?" 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. (See Matt. xix. 28. Luke xxii. 29, 30.) These indeed are wonderful things, and extraordinary. How much better will it then be with the people of God, than it is at present ? Here they meet with hatred, scorn and contempt from men ; there they will receive praise, honour and glory from God. Then shall the righteous stand in great boldness before the face of such as have reviled and persecuted them, and made no account of their labours ; and their enemies will be terribly confounded before them ; as it is finely set forth in the fifth chapter of the wisdom of Solomon. These things are not yet seen, but hoped for at the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

At

At this most glorious day of triumph the Lord Jesus, the King of glory, will give his people possession of the heavenly inheritance, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. xxv. 34. Then there will be an eternal separation made betwixt believers and unbelievers. Then, The fearful (*all who were ashamed of Christ and his words through fear of man*) "and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and all liars" (*all that taught any other way of salvation than by Jesus Christ*: for St. John saith, "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? 1 John ii. 22.) shall depart, and go away into everlasting punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels, and have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (See Rev. xxi. 8. Matt. xxv. 41, 46.) But the righteous shall go away with songs of praise, and everlasting joy upon their heads, and enter into eternal life, and into the joy of their Lord. Then will faith end in sight, and hope in fruition. For there will be fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. Then will the Lord Jesus fulfil the promise which he made to his disciples before his death, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 2, 3. There the saints shall behold the glory of their Lord; and shall see his face; and shall ever be with him. (See John xvii. 22, 24. Rev. xxii. 4. 1 Thess. iv. 17.)

But

But how shall I find words to set forth that heavenly state ; that inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away ; (1 Pet. i. 4.) that exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; (2 Cor. iv. 17.) that eternal life, which is to be the reward of the most meritorious work of Jesus Christ ; that kingdom, which God hath prepared for his beloved Son ? When the apostle Paul was caught up into paradise, he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful (or possible) for a man to utter. (2 Cor. xii. 4.) How indeed can words express those things, which God hath prepared for them that love him, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man ! 1 Cor. ii. 9. The good pleasure of God rests on his beloved Son, in whom his soul delights, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things. What reward then will he bestow upon him, for that most perfect obedience unto death, wherewith he is well pleased ? Not barely such a reward as was due to the doer of the law ; but such a reward as is suitable to the honourable and glorious work of the Redeemer. Therefore undoubtedly, the greatest reward, the greatest glory, and the greatest happiness which God Almighty can give. The heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work. We see his wisdom, and power, and goodness, and majesty by the things which he hath made in this present world. But we neither see, nor know, what he can do. The creation of this world, and all the wonderful works of God, which have been, now are, and hereafter shall be to the end of time, are only an apparatus for the glorious kingdom of Christ. The prophets have spoken great things

of

of it. (See Daniel vii. 9, &c. Isa. lxxv. 17, &c.) The glory and honour of the nations shall be brought unto it. (Rev. xxi. 26.) The good land of Canaan, and the kingdom of Israel was a type of it. But the kingdom of Israel, even in the days of Solomon in the very height of all his glory, was but as a twinkling star to the sun, when compared with the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Had Adam stood and never sinned, he would have lived thereby, and would have enjoyed this world in its paradisaical state together with the favour and friendship of his Creator. But he could not have merited any thing more. For it is the bounden duty of every creature to do the will of God in its place and order in the creation : and no creature can merit of God. The holy angels, which have stood faithful, continue happy, and enjoy the favour of God in their order in the creation ; but they are not intitled to that happiness and glory, which is the reward of the righteousness of God manifested in the flesh. For “ Christ took not on him the nature of angels, “ but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” Heb. ii. 16. The holy angels worship the Lord Jesus, and serve him now in the affairs of his church ; for they are ministring spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. (See Heb. i. 6, 14.) They rejoice at the conversion of a sinner. (Luke xv. 10.) And they learn by the church the manifold wisdom of God. (Eph. iii. 10.) And they will not be losers, but gainers, by the wonderful work of man’s redemption : for they will know more of God, and have a nearer access to him, than they had before. The rays of the Deity which were before intolerable (for God dwells

dwells in light which no man can approach unto. 1 Tim. vi. 16.) are now qualified through the humanity of Christ. And the angels, being subjected and put under the Lord Jesus as the Head of the whole creation, will probably be thereby preserved and secured from falling, and confirmed in their happy state for ever. (See Col. i. 20. and Eph. i. 10.) For they join with the church triumphant in giving praise and adoration to the Lamb that was slain. (Rev. v. 11, 12.)

But what is most amazing and surpasses thought (for who could have conceived it, if it had not been revealed ?) is, that man, who in his first and perfect state, was made lower than the angels, and who forfeited his happiness, and utterly ruined himself by disobedience, should be exalted above the angels, and have the nearest access to God. For where Christ is, there also is the church his bride to be : and the glory which he hath, his spouse also will have. John xvii. 22, 23, 24. O the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ to his church, which passeth knowledge ! O the unsearchable riches of God's grace given to sinners in Jesus Christ, and for his sake only ! " They who receive abundance of " grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall " reign in life by Jesus Christ." Rom. v. 17. The saints of all creatures will indeed have the greatest reason everlastingly to love, and praise, and adore their dear Redeemer. Well may they cast down their crowns and sing, Worthy is the Lamb !

The Lord Jesus said unto his disciples, " Because I live, ye shall live also." John xiv. 19. Once he died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ;

himself; but he rose again; " And behold, he
 " is alive for evermore, amen; and hath the keys
 " of hell and of death." Rev. i. 18. Therefore
 the saints shall live for ever, and shall be with the
 Lord Jesus for ever; where they will be happy,
 compleatly happy, always happy, uninterrupted-
 ly happy: they will be filled with all the fulness of
 God. Therefore they will be absolutely and
 most perfectly happy to all eternity. This is the
 HOPE of the gospel.

Well might the apostle Paul say, " Yea doubt-
 " less, and I count all things but loss, for the
 " excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my
 " Lord." Phil. iii. 8. To know Christ is to be
 wise unto salvation; for it is eternal life. John
 xvii. 3. Solomon describes Jesus Christ under
 the character of wisdom, and introduces him
 speaking, " Unto you, O men, I call, and my
 " voice is to the sons of man. Now therefore
 " hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed
 " are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction,
 " and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the
 " man that heareth me, watching daily at my
 " gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For
 " whosoever findeth me, findeth life, and shall
 " obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sin-
 " neth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all
 " they that hate me, love death." Prov. viii. 4,
 32, &c. And it is written, " Happy is the man
 " that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth un-
 " derstanding. For the merchandise of it is bet-
 " ter than the merchandise of silver, and the gain
 " thereof than fine gold. She is more precious
 " than rubies; and all the things thou canst de-
 " sire, are not to be compared unto her. Length

Q

" of

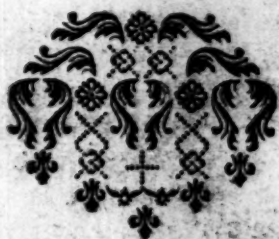
" of days is in her right hand : and in her left
 " hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways
 " of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.
 " She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon
 " her ; and happy is every one that retaineth her."
 Prov. iii. 13, &c. " Wisdom is the principal
 " thing, therefore get wisdom : and with all thy
 " getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and
 " she shall promote thee : she shall bring thee to
 " honour, when thou dost embrace her. She
 " shall give to thine head an ornament of grace :
 " a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee."
 Prov. iv. 7, 8, 9.

Now to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of
 the kings of the earth, who hath on his head
 many crowns, and a name written that no man
 knows but he himself : to him, by whom all
 things were made, and without whom was not any
 one thing made that was made : to him, by whom
 all things consist, who is King of kings, and Lord
 of lords : to him, the Lamb once slain, who is
 head of his body the Church, which he purchas-
 ed with his own blood ; who now is exalted to the
 right hand of the majesty on high, and is the ap-
 pointed Heir of all things ; who as the Son of
 man now reigns before his ancients gloriously, on
 the mount Sion in the midst of the seven golden
 candlesticks : whose head and whose hair are white
 like wool, as white as snow ; and whose eyes are
 as a flame of fire ; whose feet are like unto fine
 brasse, as if they burned in a furnace ; and whose
 voice is as the sound of many waters ; who hath
 in his right hand seven stars ; out of whose mouth
 goeth a sharp two-edged sword, and whose coun-
 tenance is as the sun shining in his strength : to
 him

him with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one glorious JEHOVAH, be blessing, and honour, and glory, and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Grace and peace be with all in every nation under heaven, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

F I N I S.



and with the Father and the Holy Spirit
God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit,
and power to us all in every nation
under heaven, who have believed in Jesus Christ
the Son of God.



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